

League condemns Falasha airlift

TUNIS (R) — The Arab League Saturday condemned a recent airlift by Israel of Ethiopian Jews as "an undertaking combining piracy and racial discrimination." The statement by the League's secretary said: "By expatriating thousands of Ethiopian citizens... the Zionist state (Israel) revealed, once more, its true face. Israel took advantage of exceptional circumstances as well as the tragedy striking thousands of African citizens to put to the fore its racist vision," it said. Meanwhile, Sudan on Saturday reiterated accusations that Ethiopia had received weapons and food from Israel in return for allowing Falashas to go to the Jewish state. It said that part of the "price" of the operation will be an Israeli shipment of food to Ethiopia on Jan. 27. The Sudan News agency carried a statement by Foreign Minister Hashem Osman which also repeated denials that Sudan had a role in the airlift of the Ethiopian Jews, which began in November, and was ended last Sunday.

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Pro-Israeli militia office attacked

SIDON, Lebanon (R) — A bomb exploded Saturday near a pro-Israeli "national guard" office in the Ain Al Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp on the outskirts of Sidon in South Lebanon wounding three people, security sources said. Resistance men so far this year have killed six people from the camp said to be collaborators with Israeli occupation forces.

Sisco holds talks with Kuwaiti leaders

KUWAIT (R) — Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco held talks here Saturday on the Middle East conflict, which Kuwaiti officials said could only be resolved by an Israeli withdrawal from Palestinian territory. Mr. Sisco, on a Middle East tour sponsored by the U.S. Information Agency, had separate meetings with Kuwait's crown prince and prime minister, Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, and Foreign Minister Under-Secretary Rashed Al Rashid.

U.S. military chief begins visit to China

PEKING (R) — General John Vessey, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrived in Peking Saturday for talks with Chinese military leaders. Gen. Vessey, who was accompanied by Admiral William Crowe, commander-in-chief of U.S. forces in the Pacific, is the most senior American military figure to visit China in more than 30 years.

Shultz, Gromyko may meet again

PARIS (AP) — U.S. National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane hinted Friday at the possibility of a second meeting between U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko to help define the areas of upcoming arms control talks. Mr. McFarlane, speaking at a news conference, also said that the United States had some "new ideas" to contribute to the negotiations but that the independent nuclear forces of France and Britain would not be compromised in any agreement.

Saudi leader to visit Algeria, France

RIYADH (AP) — Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Abdullah is to visit Algeria and France later this month for talks on means of solving problems dividing African Arab states, it was reported here Saturday. Prince Abdullah was to commence his four-day visit to Algeria Jan. 22, when he will hold talks with Algerian President Chadli Benjedid.

Reagan to keep advisory council

WASHINGTON (R) — President Reagan has decided to retain his council of economic advisers, an administration official said Saturday. The council, created by Congress in 1946, provides the president with advice from experts outside government and has often played an important role in planning economic policy.

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Lebanese army deploys along coastal highway towards Awali

JIYEH, Lebanon (Agencies) — Lebanese army troops won an emotional welcome Saturday from war-weary villagers but met occasional snags in their mission to take over the militia-held coast road south from Beirut.

Villagers threw flowers and rice, cheering as some 2,000 troops in tanks, trucks, armoured personnel carriers and jeeps deployed down the coast to the Christian town of Jiyeh, about 10 kilometres from Israel's Awali River front line.

Marie Azza, an elderly resident who waved as the convoy drove into Jiyeh along roads pocked by shell craters, said: "We hope it will go well — welcome to the army."

The army convoy halted briefly when Shi'ite Muslim Amal fighters refused to leave a building beside the road. It finally moved on, with unarmed Amal men in civilian dress still occupying the house.

Militiamen of the mainly Christian "Lebanese Forces" later prevented troops from the army's mainly-Muslim Sixth Brigade from approaching Saadiyat, the first Christian-held village on the army's route.

State-run Beirut Radio quoted Army Commander Michel Aoun as telling troops in the day's orders: "You are setting out on this mission under a unified political cover."

Rival militias, who have fought daily artillery battles in the Kharrub hills near the coast, allowed the peace plan to get underway on Tuesday when about 200 armed police moved down the coast road and into the hills.

Both militias say they have withdrawn their heavy weapons and fighters not native to the Kharrub in line with the plan.

Ayyoub Humayed, representing Amal on an all-party liaison committee supervising the deployment, told Reuters Saturday: "The essential job is for the Lebanese army to open the road to the south. We must take away Israel's pretext for the road's closure."

Israel has said the only reason for the 11-month closure of the coast road was fighting between Lebanese militias. Gunmen of the pro-Israeli South Lebanon Army guarding the Awali bridge said they did not know if the army move would affect traffic at the crossing.

Lebanon intends the deployment to prepare for army control in all South Lebanon whenever Israel ends its 31-month-old occupation.

A stream of more than 20 trucks, armoured personnel carriers and jeeps carried soldiers of the army's 12th brigade to reopen the strategic roadway Saturday.

The infantry men were accompanied by seven French-made AMX-13 tanks flying giant new Lebanese flags. They reached Jiyeh around midday (1000 GMT), four hours after the troops began moving from the southern outskirts of the capital.

Mr. Rabin said he had decided on the unilateral withdrawal because "the political path has exhausted itself. The Lebanese and Syrian positions demand an Israeli army withdrawal without assuring any suitable security arrangements."

However, Mr. Rabin said that he expected Israel to return to the Israel-Lebanon military level talks in Naqoura, South Lebanon, at least one more time to respond to certain Lebanese questions raised in previous meetings.

Mr. Rabin also said that the Israeli government was open to new

positions developed during the negotiations, which began on Nov. 8.

Israel proposed dividing South Lebanon into two security zones. One, between the Awali and Zaharani rivers at the coast and stretching east to Syria's border, would be policed by an extensive deployment of U.N. troops backed by Lebanon's army.

Israel said the role of U.N. peacekeepers in this zone would be extended to active policing, with authority for operations such as conducting ambushes. The rest of the south would be policed by an Israeli-backed militia with a "symbolic" U.N. presence.

Lebanon proposed a different division of the south, into zones either side of the central mountains. One army brigade, about 4,000 troops, would secure the eastern Bekaa and Rashaiya area, another would secure the western coastal area.

The heavily-populated area between the Awali and Zaharani



Militiamen of the Progressive Socialist Party withdrew their tanks from the Kharrub region south of Beirut on Saturday as part of a government plan to deploy army troops on the coastal highway linking Beirut with the Israeli-occupied South Lebanon (AP wirephoto)

3 killed, 31 injured in 2 Beirut blasts

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Two bombs exploded within minutes of each other in the centre of west Beirut Saturday, killing three people and wounding 31, security sources said.

They said three people were killed and 29 wounded when a bomb exploded near the Arab University. It had been planted in a pile of garbage in a demolished building.

Five minutes earlier, a bomb had gone off near a car park less than 500 metres away, wounding two people, the sources said.

Rescuers in streets busy with traffic fired automatic rifles in the air to make way for ambulances, eyewitnesses said.

In the same district Friday, a 25-kilogramme bomb exploded beside a bank, killing three people and wounding 40. On Wednesday night a bomb wrecked a restaurant near the American University, killing three people.

U.S. seeks release of captive Americans, page 2

Pakistan to go to polls on Feb. 25

ISLAMABAD (R) — Martial law President Mohammad Zia Ul Haq Saturday announced that Pakistan's first general elections in eight years would be held on Feb. 25.

Political parties, banned since 1979, would not be allowed to contest the polls for the civilian national assembly due to open on March 23, he said in a televised address to the nation.

Gen. Zia, who has twice cancelled promised polls since seizing power in 1977, said officials of all parties not registered with the government would be excluded from the polls unless he personally waived the ban.

Some political parties were registered in 1979 and their officials could contest as individuals without party labels.

But officials of parties which did not register in 1979 are barred from contesting.

The moderate Tehrik-I-Istiqal is the only group in the 11-party opposition Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD) which is registered.

Military authorities have rounded up at least 50 MRD activists over the past four days to prevent anti-government protests in Lahore, capital of Punjab province, and Rawalpindi, opposition sources said.

The MRD parties say they will boycott the elections and continue protests against Gen. Zia and his controversial referendum last month which assured him five more years in power.

The president, dressed in his general's uniform, did not spell out the changes he wanted to make in the suspended 1973 constitution before the elections to enhance the powers of the president.

He said candidates in the elections would have to be upright citizens and would have to limit their campaigning to indoor meetings, canvassing and posters.

France sends 1,000 police to New Caledonia

PARIS (R) — Prime Minister Laurent Fabius announced Saturday 1,000 police would be sent to New Caledonia, where a state of emergency has been declared amid fears of fighting between white settlers and militant Kanaks.

Mr. Fabius announced the decision to journalists after a crisis meeting with Interior Minister Pierre Joxe and Defence Minister Charles Hernu, which followed 24 hours of violence in the French South Pacific territory.

"I have decided to send 1,000 men immediately to New Caledonia as a reinforcement to protect law and order," Mr. Fabius said.

France's special envoy in New Caledonia, Edgar Pisani, declared the state of emergency after police shot dead two prominent Kanak (Melanesian) militants and fought running battles with several thousand rioting white settlers in the capital, Noumea (See page 8).

Israel seeks to move border to Awali, Lebanese say

By William MacLean
Reader

BEIRUT — Lebanon is ready to deploy 10,000 soldiers to police the southern third of the country once Israel pulls out but detailed arguments over security block a withdrawal accord, authoritative Lebanese sources say.

The sources, briefing journalists on military talks with Israel on ending its 31-month-old occupation, gave a detailed account of how the military negotiations have reached deadlock.

The talks broke down last Monday after Lebanon said it wanted an Israeli timetable for the withdrawal of its troops, deployed up to the Awali River, before considering Israeli demands that U.N. peacekeepers deploy across South Lebanon.

"They (the Israelis) want to use the U.N. as a cover to transfer the Israeli border to the Awali," one source said.

The sources said the following

would be policed by around 2,000 tactical support troops.

Israel countered that the Lebanese army needed more than 10,000 troops to police South Lebanon.

Lebanon replied that, unlike Israeli occupation troops, their soldiers would be in their own country and therefore would have the support of the local population.

Lebanon made clear it would accept deployment of the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), at present 5,200-strong and stationed south of the Litani River. But Lebanon deliberately did not elaborate on UNIFIL at the talks at U.N. South Lebanon headquarters in Naqoura, saying the matter was one for discussion between Lebanon and the U.N. only.

Lebanon declared the Israeli-backed militia, the 2,000-strong "South Lebanon Army" (SLA) at present deployed alongside Israeli

occupation troops, must be dissolved.

When the two sides discussed the possibility of integrating the SLA into Lebanon's regular army, Israel made clear Lebanon's army commander, Michel Aoun, would not have the power to send former SLA members to posts elsewhere in Lebanon.

Israel pressed its demand that Lebanon allow UNIFIL to deploy across the south. Lebanon answered by presenting a demand, formally announced on Jan. 6 by President Amin Gemayel, for an Israeli timetable.

This was declined. The talks broke down.

One source elaborated on the Lebanese stance by saying: "We want them to give us a plan at least to show good intention that they do want to withdraw."

Asked by Reuters about the possibility of Lebanon making concessions over U.N. deployment to balance "concessions"

made by Israel, a senior government source said: "We first have to know the real goal of these talks. It's not a question of balance."

Israel invaded Lebanon in June 1982 with the declared aim of ejecting Palestinian commandos. At Naqoura, it says it is negotiating "security arrangements" for South Lebanon that would stop Palestinian fighters from returning to attack northern Israel.

The sources declared they were optimistic that the Naqoura talks would resume next week, most probably on Thursday.

The sources said they did not foresee the issue of Israel's electronic monitoring station on the Jebel Barouk peak in the Shouf mountains hampering the withdrawal talks.

A full Israeli withdrawal would entail Israel giving up the station, which eavesdrops on communications and air traffic around Lebanon, Syria and beyond.

Abu Iyad favours U.S.-PLO talks

ABU DHABI (R) — A leading Palestinian official was quoted Saturday as saying he favoured a dialogue between the United States and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Salah Khalaf (Abu Iyad), a senior political advisor to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, also said in an interview with the daily Al Kaleej newspaper of the Gulf emirate of Sharjah: "Those (radical PLO groups) who do not want a dialogue with the U.S. are short-sighted," he added. There is a difference between having a dialogue and being an agent for the United States. Washington refuses to deal with the PLO unless it recognises Israel. Israel was founded in 1948 on Arab land and occupied the Arab West Bank and Gaza Strip by force in 1967. The PLO refuses to recognise Israel as a result. Mr. Khalaf repeated charges that Syria was backing plots by anti-Arafat forces to assassinate prominent Palestinian leaders. He said three camps had been set up outside Damascus to train people for that purpose.

135 feared dead in Gulf air crash

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — A West German Lufthansa jetliner crashed into the Gulf waters near the Iranian coast Saturday, and Kuwait air port control tower sources said that 135 persons were believed killed.

The sources, quoted by the Associated Press, said it was "very likely" that a number of the passengers were still alive.

"We know there were more than 190 persons aboard the plane," said one Kuwaiti airport officer, who refused to be identified. "It is very likely that a number of the passengers survived."

The source said the report from the plane said "we are sinking."

In Oman, Muscat air traffic control said a plane had crashed near the coast of Iran, but could give no further details.

Israeli ham radio operator Mickey Gurdus told the Associated Press that he heard Kuwait air control tower say that there were 197 people on the plane and that there were 62 survivors.

He said a man claiming to be a passenger on the plane sent out a "May Day" message saying that the plane crashed near the Iranian coast, that it was filling up with water and he was hauling out.

Gurdus said he had heard signals from Iranian aircraft searching for the crashed plane but they had not found anything.

Gurdus said he had received contradictory reports on the identity of the aircraft. He said the man claiming to be a passenger described the plane as Bangladeshi, while Aden air control tower in South Yemen described the plane as German.

The control tower did not say whether it was West or East German, Gurdus said. However, Gurdus said the control tower reported that the plane was a Boeing 707, an American aircraft which an East German company would be unlikely to own.

Gurdus monitors short wave radio broadcasts around the Middle East and has often been the first to pick up information of plane hijacking in the area.

In Bahrain, airport control tower officers said their radio monitors picked up a distress signal from the plane "that it was falling." But they disclaimed any knowledge about its type or nationality.

The Abu Dhabi airport tower, reached by telephone from Bahrain, confirmed the crash but said the nationality of the aircraft was not known.

Luce voices concern over attacks in Gulf

BAHRAIN (R) — Britain is deeply concerned over recent attacks on merchant shipping in the Gulf and fears they might disrupt trade in the waterway, British Foreign Office Minister of State Richard Luce said Saturday.

"These attacks on tankers are very worrying... our fear is that acts of warfare by both Iran and Iraq will intimidate shipowners and... diminish trade in the Gulf," he told a news conference at the end of a three-day official visit to Bahrain.

Mr. Luce, whose talks with Bahraini officials focused on the Gulf war, said this concern was shared by Bahrain and other Gulf states which fear any spillover of the war might cause instability in the region.

"From our point of view, which is the same as Bahrain's, if the Gulf war spreads... it will cause instability in the area... in countries where we have good relations," he said.

Attacks on merchant shipping have picked up this month, Iraq says it has struck at eight "naval targets" in the waterway already

Responding to questions on Britain's arms policies and reports that it had recently supplied Iran with weaponry, Mr. Luce said: "Our policy is not to sell any equipment which might prolong the war... we are against the sale of such equipment."

"We have given Iran some deep-sea replenishment ships fulfilling an old obligation... that is all. I have made clear to Iraqi leaders that if they have any indication of our supplying offensive weapons we would like the evidence."

(Continued on page 3)

Pope praises resumption of superpower dialogue

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul said Saturday the superpowers' agreement to resume arms talks brought the world prudent optimism and he offered the Roman Catholic Church's mediation to resolve conflicts in Central America.

In a comprehensive address on the world situation to ambassadors to the Vatican, the Pope also said the world urgently needed to resolve problems of regional conflicts, human rights, terrorism, drugs and underdevelopment.

The pontiff, who was briefed here by Reagan administration officials this week on the U.S.-Soviet talks in Geneva, called the superpowers' agreement an extremely necessary step to resume a dialogue that had been frozen for too long.

"It seems that one can once again feel a prudent optimism. God willing, the valuable negotiations, which no doubt will be laborious, may confirm the favourable forecasts," he said.

The pontiff said the United States and the Soviet Union had enormous moral and political responsibility for humanity's fate because of their unrivaled economic and military power.

He added that the "bipolarisation" of the superpowers could limit freedom of expression and initiatives of other nations and that international relations needed reciprocity, solidarity and collaboration.

"This responsibility of the two powers... finds its justification only in as far as it allows other countries to take their place, to take their own initiatives... for the good of the world community," he said.

Discussing regional conflicts around the world, he offered the church's mediation in Central America, where the local church in El Salvador has already played a major role in talks between the government and leftist guerrillas.

"The church knows well that de-escalation is difficult but that there must be the courage to begin. For its part, for example in Central America, it is ready to offer itself as the place or the occasion allowing sides to meet, to comprehend each other and to begin a sincere peace dialogue," he said.

"If the Holy See talks about it (conflicts) even if members of its church are not involved, it is because it cannot resign itself to see innocents, who have already paid so dearly for the stupidity of war, destroyed and massacred," he said.

The Pope said some countries defended human rights and independence at international organisations but trampled human rights at home and interfered with internal affairs of others.

"How can one talk of the right to independence as the ABC of principles ruling international relations if one intervenes from abroad to incite and support subversive forces in another country... against the will of the majority?" he asked.

Egypt deplores new Israeli settlement in West Bank

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt on Saturday strongly deplored Israel's decision to build new settlements in the occupied West Bank, saying it was both illegal and prejudicial to Middle East peace.

A Foreign Ministry statement carried by the official Cairo Radio said that despite the move, Egypt continued to hope that the present Israeli government coalition led by Prime Minister Shimon Peres will adopt a moderate line in the conflict with the Arabs.

"Egypt strongly regrets the agreement by the Labour and Likud Parties in Israel to build new settlements in the West Bank," the statement said. Referring to last Thursday's Israel Radio announcement that six new Jewish settlements will be established.

"From the very beginning, Egypt has condemned settlement building in the West Bank and Gaza not only as an obstacle to peace but also as an illegal action," the statement said.

Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza in the 1967 Middle East war along with Egypt's Sinai peninsula and Syria's Golan Heights. Sinai was restored to Egypt in 1982 under a peace treaty signed in 1979, the first between an Arab country and Jewish state.

"Our hope was and still is that moderate will prevail in the policies of the present Israeli government," the statement said. "Such actions (settlement building) do not help efforts toward peace and stability."

"The Israeli government should refrain from taking any measures that would contribute to a further deterioration of the situation in the region," the statement said. In Paris Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Boutros Ghali Friday night urged the restoration of Palestinian rights as a precondition for peace in the Middle East.

"The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the centre of gravity of the conflict in the Middle East," he said in a lecture to the Franco-Egypt Association during a four-day stay in Paris.

"There will be no global settlement without the restoration of the Palestinians' national rights," Dr. Ghali said. Peace negotiations would not succeed unless measures were taken immediately

to prevent Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which he said were leading to a de facto annexation of the Arab territories.

He said Egypt was trying to draw the world's attention to a degradation of human rights in the territories and cited in particular destruction of Palestinian homes. He called for United Nations-led negotiations to restore Palestinian rights.

He told journalists afterwards that the European Community could play an important role by persuading both the United States and Israel to step up the search for Middle East peace.

Mr. Ghali earlier had talks with French External Relations Minister Roland Dumas.

Meanwhile interim negotiations over the disputed Tabaa area are expected to begin within two weeks, but Egypt holds out little hope of improved relations with Israel until it regains sovereignty over the Red Sea beachfront border, an Egyptian official said Friday.

In an Israel Television interview conducted in Arabic, Egypt's charge d'affaires in Tel Aviv, Muhammad Bassiouny, said the real issue is not about an interim agreement.

"We are not talking about temporary steps but about a solution which goes to the roots... after sovereignty (in Tabaa) is decided we can talk about cooperation."

But Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, in a separate TV interview, claimed that Egypt should return its ambassador to Tel Aviv to indicate its goodwill before expecting Israeli concessions over the one-square-kilometre strip of beach.

"I am still waiting to see how the Egyptians will compromise and I think an impressive sign would be the return of their ambassador to Tel Aviv," Mr. Shamir said.

Egypt withdrew its ambassador in Sept. 1982 to protest the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

Negotiations between Israel and Egypt on their one-square kilometre border dispute in the Sinai peninsula are expected to start about Jan. 20, an Israeli official said Friday.

Uri Savir, spokesman for Prime Minister Shimon Peres, said the talks may begin in the next week or two in the southern Israeli city of Beerseba.

Mr. Savir said in an interview that an opening date of Jan. 20 was "being explored between the two governments."

Libya reportedly seeks Greek arms

ATHENS (R) — Libya is interested in buying Greek military hardware worth \$500 million, Greek Defence Under-Secretary Pausanias Zakolikos has said.

Mr. Zakolikos, who visited Libya last month, told reporters that if the deal went ahead, it would be the first time Greek military technology was exported.

He gave no details of the arms Tripoli wanted but said they would be purely defensive.

Greek State Television reported before his visit that Libya was seeking anti-aircraft guns, including the Greek-developed Artemis System, fast patrol boats,

army vehicles and technical help for the Libyan Air Force.

An agreement signed by Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu in Tripoli in September foresees assistance by this maverick NATO member to Libya's military industry.

Sharon case set to go to jury on Monday

NEW YORK (R) — A jury resumes work on Monday to decide if Time magazine defamed former Israeli defence chief Ariel Sharon in an article about a 1982 massacre of Palestinian refugees.

The key question facing the four women and two men after their weekend break is whether Time acted with malice and reckless disregard for the truth in publishing its report.

The magazine has already conceded that part of its story on the official Israeli inquiry into the killings at the Sabra and Shatila Refugee Camps at Beirut was wrong. But U.S. law stipulates that malice must be proved in libel cases.

The \$50-million suit will go to the jury following legal instructions from Judge Abraham Sofaer.

On Friday the jury heard the last of two days of closing arguments by lawyers for Time and Mr. Sharon, presentations that differed starkly in style and emphasis.

The case centres on a 113-word paragraph in a long Time story on the official Israeli inquiry into the

killings. The paragraph said that Mr. Sharon discussed the need for revenge with Falangist leaders after the murder of Lebanese president-Elect Bashir Gemayel.

After hearing Time lawyer Thomas Barr on Thursday deliver a conversational argument that Time had not intended to libel Sharon, the jury heard a fiery summation of two months' evidence from Sharon lawyer Milton Gould, 75.

Mr. Gould held forth for six hours, accusing Time of printing "filthy lies" and disgracing American journalism.

"What was done to General Sharon — done recklessly and without any decent concern — was an infamy," said Mr. Gould.

Mr. Gould described the media conglomerate as "a vast organism working in its own way with a virtual license to destroy the reputation of other human beings."

In his five-hour summation, Mr. Barr had conceded that Time erred by attributing Mr. Sharon's alleged revenge remark to a secret appendix to inquiry's report.

Mr. Barr said, however, that Time's reporters believed the information was contained in the appendix when the story was published and therefore were not guilty of malice.

In another bizarre twist, spokesmen for both Mr. Sharon and Time told reporters Friday that Judge Abraham Sofaer made a futile bid to engineer a settlement in the case on Wednesday.

Mr. Gould said the judge drafted "a form of retraction" for Time but Mr. Sharon, whose suit seeks \$50 million, rejected the statement after it was revised by magazine officials.

Another Sharon spokesman said Time officials had emulated the draft.

Mr. Sharon himself told reporters he was not satisfied with Time's offer, which apparently simply repeated a concession made in court that part of its story was erroneous.

"I want a retraction and an apology," Mr. Sharon said. "There is no room to play around."

Court sources reported earlier that Time had offered a retraction last month which was acceptable to Mr. Sharon, but mysteriously withdrew it.

U.S. seeks release of captive Americans

WASHINGTON (USIA) — State Department Deputy Spokesman Alan Romberg said he had no specific information to offer concerning any of the five Americans who have been kidnapped in Lebanon over the past ten months.

The latest abduction involved the Reverend Lawrence Martin Jenco, director of the Catholic Relief Services operation in Beirut. He was kidnapped by unidentified gunmen on Jan. 8. The Islamic Jihad, a shadowy organisation about which little is known, has claimed responsibility. The Islamic Jihad has said it will not release Americans it holds until all Americans have left Lebanon.

"I really don't have anything to give you on the question of the various people who have been kidnapped," Mr. Romberg told reporters. "Obviously we continue to be in contact with a variety of parties in an effort to obtain the safe release of American citizens held in Lebanon."

Mr. Romberg declined to offer details about the on-going contacts other than to say they were with "parties who might be able to be of assistance."

He emphasised that the administration takes very seriously the effort to bring about the freedom of the Americans, but he pointed out that "these are very sensitive issues."



ARMY TAKES OVER MILITIA AREAS: Militiamen aboard a multiple rocket launcher watch as a Lebanese armed personnel carrier lead an army convoy into militia-held areas south of Beirut Saturday (AP wirephoto)

U.S. will be deeply interested in Middle East, Lugar says

WASHINGTON (USIA) — Senator Richard Lugar, the new chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said at a briefing at the Foreign Press Centre on Jan. 10 that Secretary of State George Shultz and Defence Secretary Casper Weinberger would be the first witnesses at a series of foreign policy hearings his committee will hold over several weeks starting on Jan. 31.

Sen. Lugar also discussed the U.S.-Soviet agreement to hold arms talks, the Reagan administration's Strategic Defence Initiative, the relationship between federal budget constraints and foreign assistance, and U.S. policy vis-a-vis Central America, East Asia, the NATO countries, the Middle East and South Asia, and the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Following are Mideast excerpts from Sen. Lugar's briefing:

Question: After the Geneva talks there are wide fears that the U.S. foreign policy will be focused largely on the issue of arms negotiations and relations with the Soviet Union. The question is how much time, energy, and attention will be given to other issues such as the regional conflicts? I have in mind — I am from the Middle East and I have the Middle East in mind.

Answer: Well, I think that there will be great attention paid to the strategic talks but we're going to be deeply interested in the Middle East. In the Congress, and so will the president, I think it goes without saying that life goes on all over this planet in interesting and important ways, and one of the reasons for casting these comprehensive hearings at the beginning was to make certain we don't overlook those things that are going on simultaneously with each other.

Now, specifically, the Middle East questions may arise in the formats of visits by noted authorities and leaders, to this country, in which we'll be involved as a committee, and visiting personally with either heads of state, foreign ministers, or others. We will have a vigorous debate, I am certain, on foreign assistance, both of a military and economic

character. That will be a feature of every year, but it will be especially pointed this year with our own budgetary constraints.

So, I would reassure you that the Middle East will not be forgotten. We are hopeful that, as a matter of fact, we always look for progress there, although I must say I have no news for you today, or any signs, at least, that we are going to make headway in the next few weeks.

Q: I have one more. The U.S. officials, in the past four years, have done so many visits to the Middle East. They achieve little. What will — what do you expect to be done in the coming four years?

A: Well, I don't have any anticipations. I would say that the visits of our officials are important so that we are as well informed as possible, so the interest of the United States is well known.

But I think to ever give the impression that visits by United States officials are likely to be determinative in working out the policies of nation-states in those conflicts, you know, is obviously untrue. There must be some fundamental changes of mind and heart and we will follow those nuances carefully, and try to at least pick up and influence and encourage those that we find.

Q: I would like to ask you something specific about the Middle East. You were quoted a few weeks ago, saying that while the United States is having financial, economic, difficulties of balancing its budget, it may be a bit difficult to support huge increases in foreign aid such as to Israel, \$4,000 million and something, and even to Egypt. Now is this a fair expression of what you feel, one? And two, knowing that the Congress usually, having watched previous Congresses, they always seem to give Israel what Israel wants. Now if this Congress is going to do the same, do you think they may try to influence — I don't want to use the term "pressure" — Israel to adhere to some U.S. policies in the region regarding peace?

A: I suppose there is no more difficult question to predict in the foreign aid area than the aid to

Israel and the aid to Egypt because the two at least have been related when we considered them in the foreign assistance bill and have been related by the administration. So we're really talking about both countries. And my guess is that package of assistance in all forms may very well come to something close to half of the foreign assistance bill. So it's a very consequential item. After you list all of the rest of the countries that may be involved in any one way, it sort of diminishes rapidly.

There is strong support in the Congress for assistance to Israel and Egypt. There is strong support in the administration. One reason why there has been no announcement by the administration is that there is also strong support in both the administration and the Congress for somehow grappling with the problem of our federal deficit.

So on the one hand, we're discussing informally but increasingly in public freezes across the board of every programme domestically. There even is discussion, as you heard at the press conference, about what would have been unthinkable a short time ago, and that is a freeze on the cost of living increase for Social Security, \$3 billion recipients of Social Security. The president didn't sign off on it, but nevertheless he recognised that might be forthcoming from the Congress, and he hasn't said absolutely no. And now, of course, even discussion of a freeze on either the budget appropriation or the outlays for defence, which gets us into a whole series of questions in terms of burden sharing with allies and with others to whom we have obligations. That is how seriously the budgetary thing is taken.

Now when asked in that context, how is the aid going to go for Israel, Egypt or anybody else, you can understand why there is a great deal of poignancy as members of Congress discuss this with their constituents, who may be in the pathway of programmes that are about to be terminated or even at best frozen.

U.N. team meets Iraqi officials

BAGHDAD (R) — A three-man United Nations team investigating conditions for Gulf war prisoners began talks with Iraqi Foreign Ministry officials here Saturday, Iraqi officials said.

Professor Torken Opsahl of Norway, Maj. Gen. Rafael Vale-Huerta of Venezuela and Prof. Wolfram Kark of Austria arrived Friday night from Geneva for a six-day visit during which they will tour camps for Iranian prisoners, they said.

The mission will also make a six-day visit to Iran to inspect prisoner-of-war camps there before reporting back to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

The team was formed last November after an incident in a camp in Iran in which a number of Iraqi prisoners were killed or wounded. Meanwhile Baghdad's government-run press said Saturday the increased Iraqi attacks this year on shipping in the Gulf reflected fresh determination to tighten the blockade on Iran's oil exports from Kharg Island.

Iraq says it has struck at eight "naval targets" in the strategic waterway this year, compared with an average of less than one a week last year.

Only two ships have reported being hit since Jan. 1. But shipping sources in Bahrain Saturday said one of two attacks reported by the Baghdad military spokesman Friday was a near miss, by metres, on an unidentified vessel believed to be a tanker close to Kharg Island terminal.

Iraq's Al Jumhuriya daily said Saturday the attacks on ships using Kharg would continue "even if Gulf waters change into a graveyard for these targets."

And the ruling Ba'ath Party newspaper Al Thawra said Iran's rulers would be made to understand that a policy of war "would result in nothing but catastrophes and destruction."

"It said that 'Iraq has decided not to retreat or stop attacking this vital target (Kharg)... the Iraqi missiles will continue striking the oil tankers... and they are able to change Kharg to an island of blazing fire.'"

In Kuwait, a senior Gulf Arab official Saturday called on Iran to accept diplomatic efforts to end its 51-month-old war with Iraq.

The Gulf war had become "the prime concern of the Gulf states," said Abdullah Yacoub Bishara, secretary-general of the six-nation GCC Cooperation Council (GCC).

The Gulf states are sparing no effort to stop the bloodshed in the region," he told reporters. "We call on Iran to accept an initiative to bring an end to the conflict."

Mr. Bishara said foreign ministers of the GCC, which groups Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, would meet in March to assess the Gulf situation.

TV & RADIO

WHAT'S GOING ON

FOR THE TRAVELLER

USEFUL TELEPHONE NOS.

<div><div>JORDAN TELEVISION</div><div>MAIN CHANNEL</div><div>17:00 Koran 17:10 Cartoons 17:30 Children's Programmes 18:45 That's Incredible 18:45 Local Health and Life Programme 19:15 Programmes Review 19:30 News Programme 20:00 News in Arabic 20:30 Arabic Series 21:15 Tomorrow's Programmes 21:30 A documentary on Islamic cultural and technological influence in Europe 22:20 Local Varieties 23:00 News in Arabic</div><div>FOREIGN CHANNEL</div><div>18:00 French Programme: Michel Sardou 19:00 News in French 19:15 Varieties 19:30 News in Hebrew 19:45 News in Arabic 20:00 Tonight 20:30 Don't Wait Up 21:10 The Making of the Continent 22:00 News in English 22:30 Remington Steele</div><div>RADIO JORDAN</div><div>855 KHz. AM & 99 MHz. FM & partly on 95.60 KHz. SW</div><div>07:00 Light Music 07:30 Newsweek 08:00 Morning Show 08:30 News Summary 09:00 Morning Show 11:00 Pop Session 12:00 News Summary 12:30 Pop Session 13:00 News Summary 14:00 News Bulletin 14:30 Science Report 15:00 Concert Hour 16:00 News Summary 16:30 Instruments 17:00 Old Favourites 17:30 Listeners' Choice 18:00 News Summary 18:30 Jazz Hour 19:00 Newsweek 19:30 Date with a Star 20:00 Evening Show 21:00 News Summary 21:30 Evening Show 22:00 News Summary 22:30 Evening Show 23:00 News Headlines</div></div>	<div><div>BBC WORLD SERVICE</div><div>630, 720, 1413 KHz</div><div>06:00 Newsweek 06:30 Juke Box Duty 06:45 Financial Review 06:50 Reflections 07:00 World News 07:09 24 Hours: News Summary 07:30 Good Books 07:45 Letter from America 08:00 Newsweek 08:30 Jazz for the Ashing 09:00 World News 09:09 24 Hours: News Summary 09:30 From Our Own Correspondent 09:50 Letter from London 10:00 World News 10:09 Reflections 10:15 The Pleasure of the Week 11:00 World News 11:09 British Press 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to Nato</div><div>VOICE OF AMERICA</div><div>MW 1260, KHz. 7200, 9265, 11740, 11925 & 15210</div><div>06:00 VOA Morning News: Internal Presentation of Popular Music with Feature Reports, Interviews, Answers to Listeners' Questions, Science Digest, Sports News at 30 minutes past the hour. 06:15 Focus 07:00 News 07:10 News Horizons and New Products 07:30 Music USA 08:00 News 08:10 International Viewpoints 08:30 Special English News and Features 09:00 News 09:10 News 09:20 News 09:30 News 09:40 News 09:50 News 10:00 News 10:10 News 10:20 News 10:30 News 10:40 News 10:50 News 11:00 News 11:10 News 11:20 News 11:30 News 11:40 News 11:50 News 12:00 News 12:10 News 12:20 News 12:30 News 12:40 News 12:50 News 13:00 News 13:10 News 13:20 News 13:30 News 13:40 News 13:50 News 14:00 News 14:10 News 14:20 News 14:30 News 14:40 News 14:50 News 15:00 News 15:10 News 15:20 News 15:30 News 15:40 News 15:50 News 16:00 News 16:10 News 16:20 News 16:30 News 16:40 News 16:50 News 17:00 News 17:10 News 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NEWS IN BRIEF

Ministry starts energy saving campaign

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources has begun a campaign to guide Jordanian citizens about economising their consumption of energy as part of a national rationalisation programme. The ministry started its campaign through local newspapers to be followed later by the use of Jordan Television. This will be followed by the printing and distribution of posters, books and video films to be used in schools, social societies and clubs.

WHO delegation arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation of experts from the advisory committee of the World Health Organisation (WHO) arrived here Saturday on a visit to Jordan lasting several days. The delegation will hold talks with Jordanian officials from the Ministry of Health concerning health services in Jordan's hospitals. The delegation, who are here on an invitation from the Ministry of Health, will also visit a number of health centres and hospitals.

Ajlouni to attend health ministers' talks

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Health has decided to take part in the 40th session meetings of the Arab health ministers council, scheduled to be held in Qatar on Jan. 24 with a delegation to be led by Minister of Health Kamel Al Ajlouni. On the agenda of the two-day meeting are a Jordanian working paper, the health situation in the occupied West Bank, support of health services to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, training programmes in preventive research for Arab doctors as well as the council's prizes for research in health sciences.

Teacher murders colleague

TAFLAH (J.T.) — A 30-year-old teacher was murdered Friday while driving his car in the main street of Tafelah. A colleague who worked with the deceased at Ain Albidha high school of Tafelah followed him in another car and fired several shots of his revolver. The victim died immediately. Police have apprehended the killer and started investigations.

PTC plans to buy new buses

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Public Transport Corporation (PTC) plans to purchase new buses at a cost of JD 3.25 million, according to PTC Director General Ibrahim Mahadin. He told the Arabic Daily Al Ra'i that the PTC will also introduce improvements to the bus services such as installing radio communications and using computers to facilitate work. The PTC has drawn up a five-year plan which will cost JD 4.7 million to implement.

JEA completes electrification study

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) Planning Department has completed the rural electrification study under which 42 new villages, inhabited by 11,000 people, will be supplied with electricity in Karak, Tafelah, Aqaba and Ma'an regions. Work on the project is expected to start this month with a total cost of about JD 2 million.

CRD delegation registers 7,500 Jordanian families in Kuwait

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation from the Civil Registration Department (CRD) returned to Amman Saturday at the end of a two-month visit to Kuwait. The delegation registered Jordanians living in Kuwait and issued them with family identity cards and personal identity cards, according to delegation member and legal adviser at the CRD, Mr. Ziyad Al Sharari.

He said a total of 7,500 Jordanian families, numbering 52,000 people were registered, and a total of 5,000 identity cards have so far been issued to them. Apart from Mr. Sharari, the delegation included two senior CRD officials.

Lebanon sends army to south

(Continued from page 1)

Army units also drove to the villages of Wadi Zeini and Shihm in the hills overlooking the 35-kilometre coastal highway, state radio reported.

On the road through Damour, militiamen stood on both sides of the highway watching as the troops moved. Farther south, a "Lebanese Forces" militiaman who identified himself only as Hani said that "all the road is free" to Israeli posts at the Awali River.

Authoritative government sources told Reuters Friday the army would engage Israeli troops venturing north of the Awali. "Everyone has the right to defend themselves on their own territory," they said.

The army deployment coincided with a reshuffle of senior government posts announced by Prime Minister Rashid Karami after a cabinet meeting.

Edward Naim, a Maronite Christian law professor, replaces Michel Khoury as governor of the Central Bank. Michel Samaha, a Greek Catholic who is among President Amin Gemayel's closest advisers, becomes chairman of state-run television.

Ayyoub Humayyed, the Shi'ite

Amal official, was appointed director-general of the information ministry.

Mr. Karami said the cabinet had set up a committee to consider how to deal with Lebanon's economic crisis. Former Finance Minister Elias Saba told Reuters Friday that government finances, the national currency and banking system were in danger of collapse.

He said the crisis was beyond the government's control. Cabinet decisions are not going to make any difference one way or another.

Mr. Karami said the cabinet was briefed on Saturday's troop deployment and had given the army's military council a week to report on a plan to establish army control of the coast road from Beirut north towards the port of Tripoli.

It would also consider how to reopen the main Damascus highway, closed since September 1983, he said.

Sending troops south from Beirut is a major boost for the government and, if Israel agrees to resume troop withdrawal talks it broke off last Monday, still strengthens its case that the army can effectively control South Lebanon after Israeli troops leave.

Luce voices concern over Gulf

(Continued from page 1)

dence immediately," he said.

The minister said he was pessimistic about a near solution to the conflict, but he expressed satisfaction with resolutions reached by foreign ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Gulf Cooperation Council last November which called for peaceful moves to end it.

On the Middle East situation, Mr. Luce said Britain was closely following moves by Jordan in the search for a solution to the Palestinian problem.

"The lack of a settlement is extremely dangerous and there is an urgent desire to find a settlement. What King Hussein is doing is important... but whether Israel gives priority to peace with its neighbours remains the question," he

said. Mr. Luce said he would leave for Oman Sunday on a similar three-day visit and then return to London.

British Embassy sources in Muscat said the visit was a follow-up to regular meetings of the Oman-British commission which regulates and promotes trade relations between the two countries.

The Associated Press adds: Mr. Luce, who arrived in Bahrain Thursday on a three-day visit, was received by Sheikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, with Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad bin Mubarak and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad bin Khalifa attending.

Zaben, Klibi discuss Arab satellite

TUNIS (Petra) — Minister of Communications Mohammad Al Zaben, currently on a four-day visit to Tunis Friday, discussed with Arab League Secretary General Chadi Al Klibi the projected Arab satellite due to be launched on Feb. 8 and the services which will this satellite offer for joint Arab action.

In a statement following the meeting, Dr. Zaben said that Arab communications ministers and Mr. Klibi will proceed to the French colony of Guyana in South America to watch the launching of the Arab satellite.

Dr. Zaben is chairman of the General Assembly of the Arab Satellite Communications Organisation (ARASAT).

Dr. Zaben is also expected to meet with his Tunisian counterpart to discuss ways to promote cooperation in telecommunications between Tunisia and Jordan.

Technical team reviews solar energy usage

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Arab Organisation for Standardisation and Metrology (AOSM) technical committee Saturday opened a two day meeting at the organisation's headquarters in Amman.

At the meeting the committee which is entrusted with tackling solar energy and its application to various fields, discussed the endorsement of specifications and standards for Arab solar energy projects, according to Dr. Mahdi Hannoush, the AOSM's director general.

In his speech to the meeting's opening session, Dr. Hannoush underlined the importance of solar energy for the Arab World as an alternative to oil and gas. He said that the world's reserves of oil will end within 100 years while coal reserves will not last more than 400 years but solar energy can last for ever.

Dr. Hannoush said that all efforts should be exerted to exploit solar power for technology, industry and other fields. This has to be done since the whole world is now seeking alternative sources of energy despite the fact that the Arab World still possesses large deposits of oil. Dr. Hannoush added, he called on the committee to draw up standard specifications for the use of solar energy to benefit all Arab countries.

Delegates from Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia and Morocco are on the committee.

Green roadsides planned for Irbid

(Continued from page 1)

IRBID (Petra) — Programmes have been drawn up for planting forest trees along roadsides in Irbid Governorate. The Irbid agriculture department, in cooperation with the education department, public works department, Yarmouk University, community colleges and the Jordan Armed Forces, will be taking part in carrying out these programmes.

Dr. Tuheshat said that other important projects will be carried out during 1985 and public services will also be improved. He said that a total of 20 public gardens will be set up on a 300 dunum area in addition to three gardens for children. There will be new streets and the lighting will be improved, he added.

Libraries, museum

During this year, he said, the municipality will build a modern public library on a piece of land offered by the Irbid Development Corporation which had completed feasibility studies on the project.

Also, the national museum will be developed and a children's public library will be built near Yarmouk University, Dr. Tuheshat said.

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

IRBID — At last, Irbid will have its own sewers and digging for the project is due to start next month. According to Irbid Mayor Abdul Razzak Tubeishat preparations have been completed and work will go on as scheduled. Also in the coming month work will begin on laying a new water network for Irbid to replace the existing old one which has become worn out, the mayor said.

The final stages for a new water project have been finalised and water to Irbid will be drawn from Wadi Al Arab, a distance of 24 kilometres. Dr. Tubeishat added, He said that the project also entails setting up three pumping stations and a purification plant and water tower with a 110,000 cubic

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Jordan to present working papers on Palestinian refugees at Tunis talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian delegation to the general conference of Arab states hosting Palestinian refugees, due to start in Tunis on Monday, will submit three working papers dealing with various issues, according to Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs Assistant Under-Secretary Osama Tabboub.

Mr. Tabboub, who will head the Jordanian delegation to the conference, said that the three Jordanian working papers will deal with the Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank and the dan-

gers they present, the deteriorating conditions of refugee camps in the Gaza Strip as well as Israel's demolishing of houses in the Gaza Strip camps.

He added that the week-long conference will discuss the Israeli projects for removing refugee camps from their present sites on the occupied Arab territories, the recurrent deficit in the budget of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees (UNRWA) in addition to other topics on its agenda.

The conference will also tackle

the problem faced by Palestinians in their movement through and employment in Arab countries as well as the subject of Israel's nuclear activities.

The conference's resolutions and recommendations will be referred to the Arab League Council which will convene in Tunis in March. Jordan, Palestine, Syria and Lebanon in addition to the Arab League Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ALESCO) will attend the conference.

Anani outlines new drive to reduce imports, boost exports, agriculture

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

AMMAN — Jordan will this year reduce its imports and increase its exports in a drive to make available \$400 to \$500 million to offset the adverse effects on the national economy by foreign influences and factors, Minister of Industry and Trade Jawad Al Anani has been quoted as saying.

In an interview published by the local press, the minister said that the adverse influences on Jordan's economy began to affect the country at a time when the national industries reached the stage of maturity and full production.

This is what we call bad luck because we had made sure that our plans and programmes of production were perfect and one hundred per cent sound, the minister said.

He said that Jordan invested millions of dinars in major industrial projects like cement, the potash and fertilisers and expanded its phosphates production. "These projects should provide half of Jordan's total exports, but unfortunately a drop in prices occurred on the international markets and the price of raw materials rose which made it impossible for us to market the products as planned," Dr. Anani said.

The minister stressed the need to increase exports and pointed out that last year's exports reached \$230 million and this year's target is \$1,000 million. At least we should secure \$250 million worth of hard currency for the treasury this year, Dr. Anani said.

Trade agreements

For this to happen, Dr. Anani

added, Jordan has signed an agreement with Iraq for selling national products in exchange for crude oil and Jordan also expects its exports to Egypt this year to reach \$75 million instead of \$10 million in 1984. Most of Jordan's exports to these countries will be cement, building materials, refrigerators, washing machines and electrical appliances, the minister pointed out.

He said that Jordan's phosphate production is expected to increase this year from 450,000 to 800,000 tonnes while phosphate production will rise from 4.8 million to 5.7 million tonnes and fertilisers will reach 700,000 tonnes to make it possible for the export of two million tonnes. There is a good chance of exporting this much because Jordan had signed new agreements with a number of nations to sell its fertilisers, the minister added.

On the domestic front, the government will facilitate the marketing of national products locally by increasing customs duty on imported products similar to our own and will prohibit the importation of certain goods. There are also plans for awarding all tenders to local contractors to save money, the minister said.

All these measures, he said, are bound to increase the sale of Jordan's local products in the Jordanian market at a rate between JD 70 to JD 80 million over last year's figures.

Agriculture, tourism

The aim of increasing exports and reducing imports should go hand in hand with plans to increase and promote agriculture and tourism, the minister said. According to him, the aim of increasing exports and reducing imports should go hand in hand with plans to increase and promote agriculture and tourism, the minister said.

New members appointed to Jordanian Arabic Academy

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Saturday appointing the following as members of the Jordanian Academy of Arabic: Dr. Ibrahim Badran and Dr. Hammam Bisharah Ghasib.

The Ministry of Education has appointed the following as honorary members of the academy: Dr. Mahdi Alam from the Cairo Academy, Mr. Abbas Haron of the Cairo Academy, Dr. Shakir Alfaham of the Damascus Academy, Dr. Ali Abdullah of the Saudi University of Minerals and

Petroleum, Dr. Mohammad Oadrah of Syria and Spanish orientalist Jesus Rio Saldo.

The academy will hold its third annual session in April this year under the theme "Arab Scientific Heritage and Modern Life". Lectures will focus on natural sciences, maths, astrology and Islamic architecture.

The academy also decided to form a fund for furthering scientific writing and research in the Arabic language. A committee from the members of the academy was formed to supervise the fund.

Water, sewerage projects planned as part of Irbid's 1985 development plan

By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

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By a Jordan Times Staff Writer

Ministry, unions to study proposed labour law changes

By Sa'ad G. Hattar
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Secretary General of the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions (FJLU) Samir Qardan said Saturday that Minister of Labour Tayseer Abdul Jabbar has promised the FJLU representatives that he will consider their reservations about the new amendment to the Jordanian labour law and that the Ministry of Labour will study the project with the FJLU before the final endorsement is made at the parliament.

In an interview with the Jordan Times, Mr. Qardan said that the FJLU, together with the minister of labour, agreed to exert further efforts to advance the labour movement in the Kingdom.

The Ministry of Labour has recently drawn up a new amendment to the Jordanian labour law which was passed in 1952.

The amendment, which is on its way to the legislative authorities for final approval, stipulates several articles which do not meet with the workers' demands and their rights to have a decent life and the amendment also skips changes such as working hours, the age of retirement, social security for the workers and the right for foreign workers to join the Jordanian labour unions, according to some labour unionists.

Some heads of labour unions

have sent requests to Prime Minister Ahmad Obeidat and the speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament asking them to reconsider the situation and to delay the discussions of the labour law project. Some leaders said that the text of the law is disappointing to the labour movement's ambitions and violates the rights and freedom of the trade unions, which was provided for in Arab and international agreements, charters and forms.

Mr. Abdul Halim Khaddam, chairman of the central council of the FJLU had earlier said that the Ministry of Labour, when it was drafting the new amendment, did not consult the unions which are supposed to send representatives to take part in any step taken concerning the labour movement in Jordan.

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Jordan Times

Dive into foreign aid quagmire started long ago

By Fahed Fanek

ONE OF the major weaknesses in the Jordanian economy is the excessive dependency of the Treasury on external revenues in the form of direct aid.

This state of affairs started long time ago with the British subsidy amounting to 50 per cent of the budget, and allocated to the Armed Forces. Under the British mandate, and within the framework of the Jordanian-British treaty, the Armed Forces used to have a separate budget financed, one hundred per cent by London. The maximum annual British subsidy did not exceed seven million Sterling Pounds a year at the time.

In 1956, when the British treaty was revoked, and British Army officers were dismissed, the Jordanian government at

the time concluded an agreement with Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Syria, whereby the three sister Arab countries undertook to provide Jordan with financial support to replace the British subsidy. The agreed amount was 12.5 million Egyptian pounds, of which five million would be paid by each of Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and 2.5 million by Syria.

The tenure of the agreement with the three Arab countries was ten years, ending in 1966. It was assumed that Jordan will manage to become financially self-sufficient in ten years, and thus do without external budget support thereafter.

What happened later is well known. Both Egypt and Syria did not honour their commitments towards Jordan. Their excuse was that they did

not approve of the changes in government and army leadership made by the king in 1957. Only Saudi Arabia paid its share.

At this stage, Jordan found itself obliged to seek an alternative to the withdrawn Arab aid and thus the American aid started, at a volume ranging around \$60 million a year.

Here we note that external aid to the Treasury could not be unconditional, whether the conditions are explicit or implied. Even brotherly Arab aid committed to Jordan was abruptly suspended upon the formation of a new Jordanian government which was not "acceptable" to the donors.

The dependency of any country on external aid is by definition a restriction on its inde-

pendence, sovereignty, and freedom to act.

One of the most important aims for the Jordanian economic policy is to achieve financial self-sufficiency, reduce dependency on external aid and enhance domestic revenues instead.

By referring to historical data, we find out that domestic revenues covered 55 per cent of the total public expenditure during 1964 and 1965; this coverage reached its peak of 60.4 per cent in 1966, the year preceding the occupation of the West Bank which indicates that Jordanian fiscal and economic policies in the sixties were at the right track and approaching financial self-sufficiency.

After the Israeli aggression of June 1967, the balance was

disturbed and priorities changed. Domestic revenues coverage of expenditure dropped to only 36.1 per cent during the period 1967-1970.

What progress made after the occupation of the West Bank could be explained, and even appreciated, in the light of the difficult situation then prevailing. However, the problem continued during the seventies, when domestic revenues were fluctuating around 40 per cent of the budget. Not that these revenues did not grow, but that it happened because the government expenditure was growing year after year, at rates much higher than the rate of growth in domestic revenues, and higher than the growth of the economy in current or constant prices. Domestic revenues in 1979 covered a mere

36.4 per cent only of that year's budget.

Improvement of the share covered by domestic revenue took place in the eighties, not only because these revenues increased but also because Arab aid started to retreat quickly and the decrease had to be covered locally.

During the last three years domestic revenues formed around 57 per cent of the Jordanian budget, a substantial improvement, but still less than the level achieved 18 years ago in 1966, before the Israeli aggression.

Increasing the proportion of the budget covered by domestic revenues is considered to be one of the economic challenges facing the government and the people of Jordan in 1985 and beyond.

UNRWA plight persists

THE UNITED Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) has taken a decision to cancel 38 jobs at its headquarters in Amman and Vienna in order, as it said, to save some funds for the agency's operations. UNRWA Commissioner General Olof Rydbeck said that more cuts might be made if donor governments do not make more donations for the agency.

Last Wednesday, representatives of Palestinian refugees in Jordan presented UNRWA with statements condemning the agency's reduction of services and said that any decision on this should be taken by the U.N. General Assembly which initiated UNRWA's work in the first place.

In fact, UNRWA's financial crisis is a continuation of a financial problem which started in 1982 when the agency announced that it was terminating all ration to most refugees. The outcry by the refugees in the camps and Arab countries hosting these refugees did not persuade UNRWA to take another view of the problem. Many of the UNRWA employees believe that UNRWA's success in executing its decision then encouraged it to carry out more reductions in its services at present and that no real crisis exists in the agency. They say that other measures than terminating the services of local staff can be taken that can contribute to saving more funds for the refugees' services.

We believe that moving UNRWA's Vienna headquarters to the Middle East — the field of the agency's operations — and cancelling a number of higher posts with exorbitant salaries and reorganising the agency's administrative system are bound to save considerable sums that can be used to alleviate the sufferings of the refugees and increase the opportunity for maintaining health and educational services.

The plight of the refugees was brought about by the Israeli occupation of Palestine and baptised by the U.N. General Assembly which endorsed the birth of the Zionist state in the midst of the Arab Nation. Therefore, any reduction of UNRWA's services to these refugees will not be accepted by them nor by the Arab states hosting them, because the plight of the Palestinians is an international responsibility and the General Assembly should be fully aware of the situation if the agency is really facing that much of a deficit in its budget. Furthermore, since the United States is mainly responsible for the plight of the refugees in view of its continued support of Israel and its measures in the occupied Arab lands, Washington should take more responsibility towards UNRWA which was set up to offer the refugees relief aid. The United States which continues to refuse to recognise the PLO, the representative of the Palestinian people and does not accept the idea of an international conference to resolve the issue, should at least honour its moral commitment to UNRWA. Otherwise, all talk about reduction of the agency's services should be seen to contribute to that part of the so-called plan to liquidate this organisation prior to the liquidation of the Palestine issue itself.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Majority stance sufficient

JORDAN IS seeking to convene an Arab summit conference so that Arab leaders can have an opportunity to end their differences and solve their problems. A number of Arab countries along with the Palestine Liberation Organisation support such summit, because they are concerned over the developments in the Middle East and are anxious, like Jordan, to help end Arab differences so that all efforts can be pooled for the common cause. But, though the need is great for holding an Arab summit, Arab differences are causing obstacles to the way of agreement on convening it.

The minority of Arab countries which do not support an Arab summit should not be taken into consideration and the summit should be held if the majority agrees on it. The highest Arab interests require the summit and therefore the majority should act now to convene it. Lack of unanimity among Arab leaders in past summits led to disruption of important actions and resulted in the Arab Nation being so disunited and unable to confront the threats and challenges posed by its enemies.

We should not allow a minority of leaders to abort the desire and the will of the majority less we continue to be plagued by our numerous problems.

If the Arabs cannot agree on a venue for holding the summit, the Arab League Headquarters in Tunis serves as the best site for it. No differences or disputes among Arab governments should be allowed to destroy the aspirations and ambitions of the Arab masses.

Al Dustour: Words against deeds

THE OFFICIAL White House spokesman made a statement in which he said that Israeli settlements constitute an obstacle in the path of peace in the Middle East region. But the whole world, including the Arabs, realise that the settlements on the occupied Arab lands are being financed by the American treasury. The U.S. administration believes that with such statements it can absolve itself from the crimes which it helps the Israelis to commit in the Arab region, and can make the Arabs forget that it is Washington's unlimited support and financial and military help to Israel that are making this Israeli settlement policy feasible and an established fact.

Two days ago, the government of Israel announced plans for establishing six new settlements in the occupied West Bank, which means swallowing up more land and evicting more Arabs from Palestine. If the U.S. administration is really concerned over peace and regards the settlements as an obstacle in its path, why can't it stop the flow of funds and military aid to Israel which uses them to build such settlements?

Sawt Al Shaab: Things were better

CURRENT EFFORTS made to convene an Arab summit and the obstacles being placed in the way remind us of two epochs in modern Arab history. One, when Nasser was president in Egypt. At that time the Arab Nation lived a period of surging patriotism and nationalism, despite minor differences among its leaders. The other when Sadat was president of Egypt. It was during his reign that the Arabs became so much divided and at loggerheads, because of the Camp David agreement and the tendency of individual states to act alone in complete independence from the others.

The Arabs have come a long way from the time when their armies actually fought against the Zionists in Palestine and when Arab governments rallied in support of the Algerians who were then involved in their revolution against the French, and when Arab countries fully backed Egypt during the Tripartite aggression.

Most recently, another Arab country was left to bear the aggression and was left alone in the area. In its invasion of Lebanon, Israel found no Arab country to confront it or to send volunteers to fight alongside the Palestinians and the Lebanese.

Despite all this, the hope for convening an Arab summit still exists and the genuine efforts being exerted to convene such a summit should be allowed to bear fruit because the Arabs need to meet and end their differences if they want to avoid further disasters.

Palestine refugee agency hits financial crisis bottom

By Peter Humphrey
Reuter

VIENNA — The United Nations agency charged with relieving the hardships of Palestinian refugees in the Middle East is in dire financial trouble and its activities may be cut severely unless cash assistance arrives soon.

Schools and clinics run by the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are threatened with closure, officials say.

Olof Rydbeck, UNRWA commissioner general, told Reuters the agency had just three months before drastic action would have to be taken.

UNRWA is already abolishing 38 posts at Vienna headquarters and deferring pay rises to 12,000

field staff to help bridge a 67-million-dollar cash gap in its 1985 budget.

The agency needs \$232 million this year to carry on at its present level, but only 165 million has been pledged by donor countries and organisations, Mr. Rydbeck said, adding: "We can't go on like that forever."

This week the former Swedish diplomat called an emergency meeting of department heads and field directors from the Middle East areas where UNRWA works.

He told them the first step would be to cut costs without affecting services, but that if this were not enough he would "make a special appeal to governments for aid to maintain services at their current level." UNRWA officials said.

Mr. Rydbeck said the meeting would establish the framework for

cuts to be carried out in the next few months.

"I am convinced that if governments aren't prepared to come to our rescue we'll have to consider drastic measures," he said.

Cuts already made in Vienna were to show that "we are prepared to do our bit."

UNRWA began operations in 1950 to help Palestinian refugees displaced by the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. It has launched emergency efforts in the wake of later Arab-Israeli hostilities and now provides relief, education and health services for nearly two million Palestinian refugees.

Seeing UNRWA as an important service for the Palestinians pending a political solution to their plight, governments have put in more than \$2 billion over the years.

But Mr. Rydbeck said inflation and a surge in the value of the dollar in recent years had put enormous pressure on the agency's budget, 70 per cent of which represents staff costs.

UNRWA field staff in the Middle East have appealed to the world this month for intervention to save the agency. UNRWA receives some donations in kind, but cash donations by governments are its lifeline.

The crisis is UNRWA's worst since 1975, when Commissioner General Sir John Rennie threatened to close its doors if help did not arrive within 10 days, UNRWA officials said.

What does Mr. Rydbeck mean by "drastic action"? Some of the schools, clinics and other establishments run by UNRWA might have to be closed and others merged, they said.

This would outrage UNRWA local staff in the Middle East, many of whom had political allegiances to one or other of the groups involved in the broad picture of conflict in the region.

Mr. Rydbeck said he believed UNRWA's budget gap did not stem from any change in the political assessment of the agency's value by major funding countries, which he said had maintained their levels of contribution.

A major factor was the rise of the dollar against other currencies in which donations were received, which made a lot of UNRWA's cash income worth much less.

The United States is UNRWA's biggest single donor, contributing over a third of its revenue, followed by the European Community on bloc. Japan has emerged as an important donor as it

makes its contribution in dollars. Arab states continue to give despite their belief "that those responsible for the Palestinian problem should carry the financial burden", Mr. Rydbeck said.

Savings could be made both by administrative and staff measures, including the possible merger of institutions, he said. One possible area for cuts could be recurrent costs such as new buildings.

If drastic action became necessary, he would first call a meeting of Palestinian refugee host countries, "all of whom see the political value of UNRWA".

Such a meeting would present the figures on UNRWA's cash deficiency following initial economy measures and spell out the details and implications of more serious action required.



Portugal's economy plagued by political impasse

Friction between the partners in Portugal's ruling coalition has led to a slackening in corrective economic action by the government, and fears are growing of a reversal in the country's recent economic progress. Diana Smith reports.

LISBON — Disputes between Portugal's Socialist Party and Social Democrat Party (PSD), uneasy partners in the 19-month-old ruling coalition, are worrying Portugal's financial authorities.

Friction caused by premature wrangling over strategy for the presidential elections, not due until late 1985, has led to a slackening in government economic action. It is felt that unless the political impasse ends rapidly, this year's strong improvement in the external accounts could falter.

Decisions on the size and structure of overscaled, financially-burdened public enterprises, and on legislation affecting banking and investment incentives should have been taken months ago. But tension between the two ruling parties — each of which blames the other for lack of forceful economic action — has again made the fragile economy vulnerable to fractious party politics.

Although the situation has not reached the disarray of late 1982 when bickering in the former ruling alliance between the PSD and Christian Democrats gravely hurt Portugal's creditworthiness, a recurrence of PSD pressures and quarrels is causing some concern.

Thanks to ruthless economic measures from late 1983 and throughout 1984 — too ruthless for some economists because it bred soaring unemployment and a 10 per cent drop in buying power for Europe's lowest-paid workers —

Portugal made an impressive turnaround in its external accounts. This pleased the International Monetary Fund (IMF), whose tough \$380 million standby agreement with the Soares administration winds up next February.

The IMF is less pleased with persistent public overspending and the halfhearted correction in 1984 after an energetic start in 1983 of heavy subsidising of commodity prices at controversial cost to the taxpayer and treasury. The October 1983 agreement with the IMF promised drastic reduction of the subsidies. But subsidy cuts require a confident political stance.

Slack private consumption and healthy growth of exports, tourism and migrant remittances reduced the balance of payments deficit on the current accounts by the end of August this year to \$504 million — less than half the deficit of \$1.34 billion recorded in August 1983.

Sluggish imports and strong export growth produced a visible trade deficit in August 1984 of \$1.56 billion, against an August 1983 deficit of \$2.32 billion, with notable dynamism in footwear, textiles and clothing that benefited from the recovery in their traditional European markets.

The authorities expect 1984 to end with a current account deficit of \$800 million, the lowest since 1979 and \$400 million less than

the \$1.2 billion target agreed with the IMF.

In 1985, when some economic growth must be permitted after 18 restrictive months, some import recovery is expected. But since good export performance should be sustained, the authorities expect to end next year well within the current account deficit target agreed with the IMF of \$1 billion.

This year's restrictions and a dramatic drop in private sector investment shrank the Portuguese economy by 1.5 per cent to a gross domestic product of \$19.5 billion. In 1983 the administration expects three per cent growth, although some officials think it may be difficult to generate growth of more than two per cent because of the depth of the 1984 depression and decrease in confidence.

Management of the foreign debt has been helped this year by generation of export income. The foreign debt by December 1984 was \$15.4 billion, a seven per cent increase over 1983.

Short-term debt has dropped to 22 per cent of total debt, compared with a high of 33 per cent in early 1983. Debt repayment peaked at \$1.8 billion in 1984; in 1985 repayments will decrease slightly to \$1.7 billion. The authorities argue that, while the debt volume is high, the country can afford its servicing, and, unlike 1983, it has not been necessary to sell any of the gold reserves.

By autumn 1983 emergency operations with the Bank for International Settlements (BIS) led Portugal to sell 49 tonnes of gold to repay \$700 million of BIS

loans. Having raised a total of \$1 billion backed by gold from the BIS, the authorities expected to have to sell \$300 million of gold in 1984 to repay the BIS in full.

However, finances picked up so much that the authorities could pay the BIS \$100 million in cash, not gold, and the BIS agreed to roll over the remaining \$200 million.

But to reduce the forecast state budget deficit for 1984 to six per cent of GDP the budget included an expected Bank of Portugal profit from the \$300 million gold sale.

Parliament — including coalition deputies — balked at being presented with a revised 1984 deficit of Esc66 billion (\$480 million) over forecast mostly because of a hitherto-unknown gold deal or non-deal. And the governor of the Central Bank was furious at being blamed for the budget gap.

External successes have helped Portugal to strengthen its external image this year, but the core of the problem is still to be dealt with: how to manage, and what size to attribute to, public enterprises created by helter-skelter nationalisations almost 10 years ago and thereafter used either as whipping boys or repositories for political clientele of successive governments with scant attention to bookkeeping.

Even the PSD, which clamours for public sector cuts, has a large clientele holding senior jobs in the sector. Matching clamour with action is less easy under these circumstances — Financial Times news feature.

Largest L. American nation returns to civilian rule

Reuter

BRASILIA — Brazil, whose first civilian president in 21 years will be elected next Tuesday, is by far the biggest and most populous country in Latin America as well as being the fifth largest nation in the world.

It is also the largest debtor in the developing world, with a foreign debt of about \$100 billion.

These are the key facts about the country.

Population: 131 million, 60 per cent of European descent. Area: 8,511,965 square kilometres.

Capital: Brasilia (pop 1.8 million). Main cities: Sao Paulo (13 million) and Rio de Janeiro (nine million).

Economy: Gross Domestic Product (GDP) \$250 billion, annual per capita income \$2,240. Manufactured goods — arms, shoes, cars, machinery — have overtaken agricultural products as the main source of export earnings. Record 1984 exports left a \$13.1 billion trade surplus. The interest bill on the foreign debt this year will be \$72 billion.

Modern history: Brazil became independent from Portugal in 1822, and a republic in 1889 after 67 years of liberal monarchy.

Juscelino Kubitschek, elected president in 1956, laid the basis for industrialisation and built a futuristic capital, Brasilia, in the central state of Goias, to open up the country's vast interior.

Left-leaning Joao Goulart was overthrown by the military in 1964 as economic problems mounted. Five military presidents then presided over a spectacular economic boom, with growth rates averaging 11 per cent a year.

But by the end of the 1970s, growth was checked by the oil crises and soaring interest rates on Brazil's foreign debts. In 1982 the foreign debt became unmanageable and the government turned to the International Monetary Fund for help.

President Joao Figueiredo took over in 1979, promising to lead the country back to democracy. He introduced a more liberal political party system and allowed direct elections for the state governorships and most of congress in 1982.

The military balked at letting his successor be chosen by direct vote, despite a nationwide opposition-backed campaign that drew millions of demonstrators onto the streets in 1984.

مكتبة الامم المتحدة

Philanthropy is invention's midwife

IF WAR is the mother of invention, philanthropy can be its midwife. Consider the inception of Puff the Magic Dragon, one of the United States' most devastating weapons during the Vietnam War. Mounted in the rear of an aircraft, within seconds the gun's lightning rate of fire could stitch a village to the pad ("nail Charlie to the slime") as was illustrated graphically in the film *The Green Berets*. Yet mercy brought it forth.

The weapon was developed in the U.S. Air Force Aerospace Medical Research Laboratory at Dayton, Ohio, where Professor Michael McCally was then a distinctly uneasy division chief. In London for a recent executive meeting of International Physicians Against Nuclear War, Prof. McCally explained how a good intention went lethally agley.

"I had a friend in the lab who was interested in rescuing downed pilots with fixed-wing aircraft. He remembered the old 'pylon' manoeuvre, where you point the wing of the plane at the ground so that you can hover in circles. The idea was that a man at the back would lower a rope attached to a mailbag. In another part of the lab, an engineer was looking at a

reinvention of the Gatling gun which could put out huge barrages of fire."

The two concepts were wedded, the "pylon" manoeuvre providing a stable platform for Puff. Deeming this to be an improper use of medical resources, Prof. McCally resigned.

The final straw was the discovery that, despite his security rating, he was denied access to work in the basement on laser weapons. Their basic purpose was to blind the operators of anti-aircraft guns. "Our \$7 million F-5s were being shot down with World War II ack-ack guns with a minimum of technology and a human operator. That was considered terribly bad form."

His involvement with the U.S. Air Force had begun innocently enough. Soon after being drafted in 1960, like many physicians he was seconded to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration moon mission. The air force laboratory at Dayton was already a centre of expertise. During World War II, it helped to design oxygen masks, heated flak suits and the gun turrets of Superfortresses.

After the war it was partly staffed with German medical sci-

entists who had been scooped up in America's Operation Paperclip, along with German aerospace blueprints. One of these, a super V2 developed under the name *Dinosaur*, was a forerunner of the Space Shuttle. "It had a one-way manned bomber in front, boosting a shuttle-like vehicle which was intended to bomb the United States."

Professor — then Captain — McCally's principal task was to investigate weightlessness, the effects of which were virtually unknown in 1961. He put people to bed for months, tested them in centrifuges and heat chambers, and simulated weightlessness in awkwardly angled aircraft. "Did you see the film *The Right Stuff*? Well, I was doing *The Right Stuff*."

These experiments prompted a close reading of the Nuremberg Trials transcripts. "We were looking for precedents," he explained. "We were using ourselves and co-workers as volunteers. That seemed all right, but there were no committees or procedures in those days."

"A field of medical ethics has now grown up in the States, because of not war experiences but over such questions as with-

holding life support. There were atrocious experiments in the fifties and sixties that couldn't be done today — injecting live cancer cells into nursing home patients and withholding penicillin from black men with syphilis."

The Vietnam War forced him to draw the line. "It's a very grey line. We did cockpit design for what is now the B1 bomber. In that sense I did weapons development. The experience didn't make me a pacifist. I didn't feel it was the right role for a physician."

He is now professor of community medicine at New York's prestigious Mount Sinai medical school, where he augments his immunology courses by teaching military history and arms control. People must learn from history, he insists, pointing out that the current state of satellite weapons technology is equivalent to the infancy of multi-warhead missiles in 1965 — "a development that everyone now agrees should have been negotiated away."

He is not a unilateral disarmamentist, believing that the U.S. needs to maintain a credible nuclear deterrent. However his 10 years' experience of the military mind and weapons procurement makes him a useful voice in International



Professor McCally-out of BI bomber cockpit research and into the fight for peace (Guardian photo)

Physicians Against Nuclear War during its current offensive.

This year's \$1.6 billion research budget for Star Wars alarms him. "You could create a monster lobby in any industry if you put that amount of money in each year. These are not evil people, but they will spend it and we will end up with the hardware."

"Los Alamos was once a boys' school. Now it's a small city of 70,000 people who work for the weapons laboratory. Some of us went there a couple of years ago. We were not well received. But most of them are just doing a job. Their attitude is 'If we don't do it someone else will.'"

He believes American doctors

have injected a note of moral authority and urgency into the debate. Of 40,000 in the States, 25,000 belong to Physicians for Social Responsibility.

This summer he will visit China to promote the idea of a comprehensive test ban treaty. But talks and arms control are insufficient without a more positive

lead from Mr. Reagan, he says.

"We have to learn to control our technology. The most striking danger about Star Wars is that it will be totally computer controlled. There's no human in the loop; 90 per cent of the destruction has to be done in the lift-off phase. We are talking about 90 seconds." — The Guardian.

Bhopal gas leak may damage babies' brains, scientists say

By John Fullerton
Reporter

NEW DELHI — Poisonous gas which leaked from a union carbide pesticide factory in the central Indian city of Bhopal may have damaged the brains of unborn babies, a scientist was quoted Sunday as saying.

The Press Trust of India (PTI) news agency reported that S.V. Chandra of the Indian Toxicological Research Centre said she was concerned at the possibility that the brains of embryos might have been damaged when pregnant mothers inhaled the methyl isocyanate fumes.

About 2,500 people were killed and 4,000 were badly-gassed when the gas leaked from the

plant and spread across residential areas of Bhopal on Dec. 3.

Ms. Chandra told a meeting of the Indian Science Congress at Lucknow that her centre would set up a laboratory in Bhopal to conduct a year-long study into the impact of the disaster, the world's worst industrial accident on record.

Scientist S. Beg was quoted by PTI as saying that only 15 of 85 types of vegetation studied in the area had not been affected by the gas.

Beg said most plants and trees affected by the gas had been discoloured, scorched or totally defoliated, PTI reported.

Dr. S. Varadarajan, scientific adviser to the government, told the meeting Saturday that water entering an underground storage

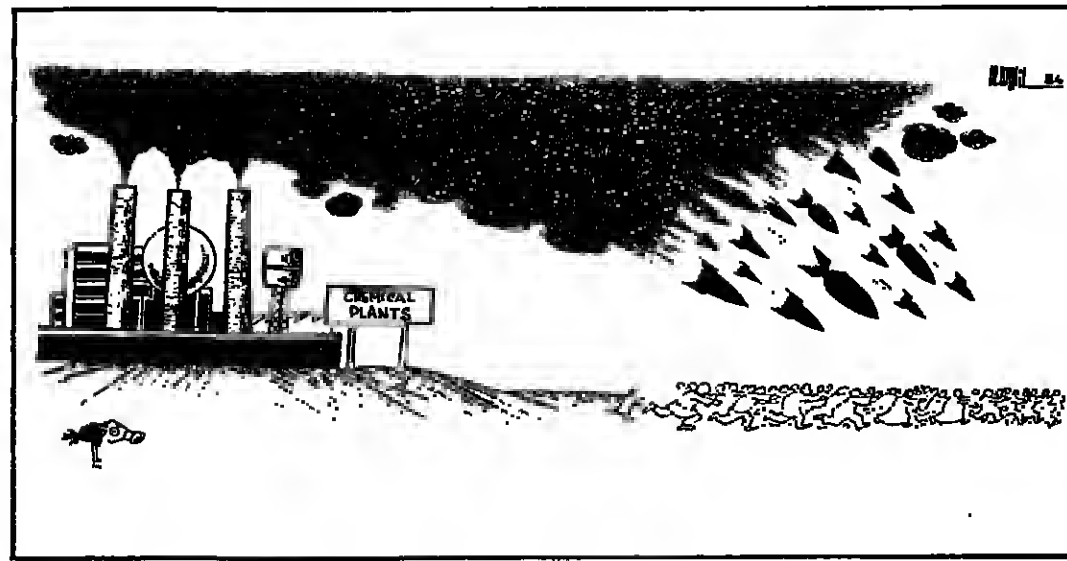
tank at the factory set off a runaway violent reaction in the poisonous substance stored there.

The tremendous heat generated by the reaction ruptured valves, allowing the gas to escape, Mr. Varadarajan said.

The factory is owned by the Indian subsidiary of the U.S. Union Carbide Company.

B.K. Roy, from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, said some wheat stored in Bhopal showed signs of damage, but it was not yet clear whether this was caused by the gas or by the storage process.

Botanist A.K. Sharma said possible genetic effects of the gas should be studied along the lines of research carried out into the impact of atomic bomb attacks on Japan in World War II.



Sudan out of the drought, into the big famine

Ethiopians fleeing drought in their country are finding drought in the Sudan. As refugee camps spring up quickly, national and UN organisations are finding it hard to get food to starving people.

By Wendy Wallace

TUKULUBAB, Eastern Sudan — Starving people are pouring into the Sudan from Ethiopia, fleeing the drought and famine there. They are finding more of the same here.

Some 12,000 people from Ethiopia's Tigray Region are gathered just a few kilometres inside Sudan, in an area called Tukulubab. They have arrived with nothing, and their only shelter is thorn bushes.

They are not fleeing the secessionist war in Tigray. One man kicked into the barren dust with his foot: "That is why we are leaving: our land is just like this desert."

(In Paris, the International Herald Tribune quoted relief workers and diplomats in the Sudan saying that the Ethiopian Air Force had bombed a group of Eritreans fleeing into Tukulubab, wounding about 50 people).

The refugees have found no relief at Tukulubab. It is an arid plain about 15 kilometres from the Sudanese town of Kassala. The mountains of Ethiopia are visible in the near distance. The refugees, who are farmers and nomad her-

ders, are malnourished, sick, and clothed in rags. Some have walked for six weeks to get to Sudan, begging for food on their way.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and voluntary agencies working in the area have begun to mobilise emergency aid. Two water tanker trucks deliver water daily to the site. Twenty-eight tankers would be needed to provide sufficient water for the people here, says Vincente Davide of UNHCR.

Some wheat flour and lentils are also being distributed. Asked how they are faring, mothers draw half-eaten loaves of bread out from under their clothes, to show what stands between them and starvation. Many hold wasted babies to empty breasts.

The Sudanese refugee administration is working to set up three official reception centres near the Rahad River. People from Tukulubab will be relocated as a matter of urgency, says Assistant Commissioner for Refugees for Kassala province, Mohammad Habib. But his administration is being overwhelmed. Another spontaneous settlement at Al Safawa contains 15,000 more Tig-

rayans. They are camped near the Atbara River, and have neither shelter, food nor medical services.

Three official reception centres in the Eastern region were causing concern to the authorities even before this month's influx. At Wad Sherif, 30,000 refugees are living in a camp planned for 5,000. Food stocks, water and health services are near the breaking point.

The refugees are fleeing one drought stricken land only to arrive in another. Patchy and low rainfall has caused 100 per cent crop failure this season in much of Sudan's Eastern region. Lack of grass and dried up water holes have taken a heavy toll on animal herds. Many areas are studded with their carcasses; camels sell for one-tenth of their price earlier this year.

Most of the 120,000 Ethiopian refugees already living in rural settlements in Sudan had attained a degree of self-sufficiency, usually growing enough sorghum to feed themselves. This year their farms stand desolate and empty. Thousands of hectares planted a few months ago have yielded nothing. Now all settlements need food aid to cover 100 per cent of need, says Ted Horton of the World Food Programme (WFP).

Given that they must supply both the established refugees and the hordes of new arrivals, the



problem facing UNHCR and the Commissioner for Refugees office is how to get enough food into the area, in time. They cannot make big purchases on the local market, because this would further inflate the price of sorghum, depriving the Sudanese of food.

WFP procedures do not allow for speedy importation of food; new supplies will not arrive until mid February. UNHCR plans to import emergency supplies of grain through nearby Port Sudan on the Red Sea coast. WFP's Ted Horton used a Sudanese saying to

describe the food situation facing refugees: "If the blanket is too small, and you pull it over your feet, your head will be showing."

Finding enough food to keep both the settled and newly arrived refugees alive is a problem that will not quickly go away. The Relief Society of Tigray warns that there are 40,000 people poised on the border, waiting to enter Sudan. They claim that food aid in Ethiopia is being withheld from Tigrayan peasants living in areas controlled by the Tigrayan Peo-

ple's Liberation Front. "It is impossible to know how many more will come," states Mohammad Habib, Sudan's Commissioner for Refugees office.

Three new reception centres for refugees are planned for the Rahad area, but they will support only 60,000. Thousands will be condemned to spend an indefinite period in sites such as Tukulubab. Whether they can survive is at the moment an open question — Earthscan feature.

Gas disaster tests W. Virginian's loyalty

Institute, West Virginia, is a company town. But when the company is Union Carbide, and its plant produces the same chemical that killed more than 2,000 people in India, it is not surprising that local feelings are mixed. Paul Taylor reports on a visit to the town.

INSTITUTE, West Virginia — The poster at the plant entrance reads "people are our most important asset... their safety and health our greatest responsibility."

The accident log on the same poster at the entrance of Union Carbide's Institute, West Virginia, plant bears out the chemical company's reputation as one of the safest industrial employers in the U.S.

But a few yards away an American flag flutters, almost patriotically, at half mast in honour of at least 2,000 dead and another 20,000 injured in the world's worst ever industrial disaster in Bhopal, India.

The two symbols graphically illustrate the dilemma faced by the third largest chemical producer in the U.S. — and by Institute's small, but increasingly concerned, population.

Union Carbide's 1,435-acre Institute plant has been producing the lethal chemical, methyl isocyanate (MIC), for 17 years in volumes 10 times as large as the Bhopal plant. It is, by some accounts, Bhopal's "sister plant" on a big scale.

The plant and half a dozen like it in the valley provide thousands of jobs for West Virginians and millions of dollars in tax revenues. Balanced against that is the air, which is acrid and nauseating on a cloudy day, the occasional chemical releases, the evacuation notices, health risks and the constant threat of something much worse.

Over the past few years, concern among residents of the valley has been intensified by a state-imposed fine on Union Carbide for illegally burning toxic wastes at another local plant and by state studies which have suggested that substantial amounts of potentially cancer-causing chemicals are being released into the air by local companies. The Bhopal disaster has served to heighten this deep-seated fear.

Union Carbide's agricultural products division Institute plant, about eight miles west of Charleston, the state capital, is just one of a number of chemical plants in the valley.

Union Carbide itself employs about 7,000 workers in several plants. Together, the chemicals industry provides 10,300 of 16,000 manufacturing jobs in the region. By some estimates the chemicals industry provides more than 50 per cent of total employment in the valley.

Certainly the industry is still a major provider and, as such, many "old timers" are reluctant to criticise it publicly. The manager of the local pizza cafe explains, "I have lived here all my life. I worked at FMC and my father worked for Union Carbide. Is it a problem? No."

West Virginia State College, with up to 5,000 students, is within a few hundred yards of the plant's main gate. Next door is a graduate college with another 4,000 registered students and up the road a mile is West Virginia's police academy.

Ten days after Bhopal, there are grumblings among the students, many of whom say they will leave the valley as soon as possible although the vast majority were born here.

Mr. Perry Bryant, Environmental coordinator for the East Virginia Citizens' Action Group, a local lobbyist group, says the number of calls to his office following the Bhopal disaster "has increased dramatically."

"What happened in Bhopal is of

concern to the whole (local) community," he says. Aside from highlighting past emissions violations he and other local residents express serious doubts about the adequacy of emergency procedures in the valley.

Union Carbide plant officials in Institute maintain their emergency procedures are satisfactory. The company says it is an active participant in the Kanawha Valley Industrial Emergency Council which brings together local chemicals companies, health officials and local government. "We have been deeply involved in plans to deal with emergencies," says Mr. Hank Karawan, Institute's plant manager. But what concerns some local residents is the nature of those plans.

For many, including Mr. Bryant, the sum total of the plan is to sound, in Union Carbide's words, "a very loud steam whistle" and hope that people who have read a 1982 "letter to neighbours" from Union Carbide can figure out the wind direction, and manage to walk "crosswind", in the event of a gas escape.

"We need a proper evacuation procedure," says Mr. Bryant. It seems that state, congressional and local officials may be edging towards the same conclusion.

A few hours after the press were allowed into the Institute plant, past the low yellow-brick administrative offices and on to a four-foot earth mound which we were told hid the MIC storage tanks, a group of local residents, local, state and federal officials, and a handful of senators were given a VIP tour of the facility. Earlier in the week the state governor had ordered his own inspection staff into the plant to monitor operations.

Mr. Bryant believes the current reevaluation of safety procedures should not be confined to MIC. "This plant makes lots of chemicals I am even more concerned about," he says. "It is really tragic that it takes something like this to make people aware." But the depth of the split in local feeling was graphically illustrated in recent editorial of the local Charleston Gazette.

The editorial headed "Legal Jackals Prowling", vigorously attacked the \$15 billion suit against Union Carbide, filed in Charleston, describing it as "encapsulating all that's rotten in this nation's legal profession."

The editorial continued: "We won't discuss the tactical stupidity of bringing a case against Carbide in a city and a state where the corporate image isn't bad by any yardstick and where the corporate clout is such that it and its employees pay perhaps one tenth of the state's total tax bill."

Union Carbide may well need such loyalty. The company took a big gamble in opening the Institute plant to the press — and, in doing so, admitted that "small" leaks, often involving faulty valves, were commonplace.

However, the answers it gave to crucial questions on comparisons between the Bhopal and Institute plants, on which it generally pleaded ignorance, often prompted even more questions.

In any event, people like Mr. Bryant hope that the one positive aspect of Bhopal will be to force Union Carbide and other U.S. chemical groups drastically to upgrade what he regards as woefully inadequate emergency procedures — Financial Times news feature.

Austrian, Belgian roads among world's most dangerous

By Hanns Neuerbourg
Associated Press

GENEVA — Austrian and Belgian roads apparently rank among the world's most dangerous. Japan has the lowest cancer death rate of all industrialised countries. The relative frequency of homicide is 15 times higher in the United States than in England.

In Hong Kong, a woman of 65 has a good chance to live 20 more years. But in Romania, site of a much-publicised geriatrics clinic, a newborn boy has a life expectancy of only 67.1 years. On the African island nation of Mauritius it is 63.2.

These data are among thousands contained in the 385-page statistical year book just published by the World Health Organisation.

Among them: — Wine-growing countries have the highest number of fatal liver ailments, including cirrhosis, per 100,000 population. In Italy, the rate was 34.3 in 1980, 29.5 in Chile and 27.6 in France, compared with 8.4 in Scotland and 4.6

in Norway in the same year.

— Suicide figures uphold the notion of a "suicide belt" extending from Scandinavia through central Europe that has been researched inconclusively for years. The rate in Hungary, at the lower end of the "belt", is the highest of all countries listed with 43.5 per 100,000. In Denmark it is 29.

— Suicide statistics, however, often are considered unreliable because of the reluctance to classify deaths as suicides in Roman Catholic countries where the act is viewed as a grave sin.

— Austria's traffic fatalities number 25 per 100,000 population, followed by Belgium with 23.2.

— In Japan, suicides outnumber fatal automobile accidents. In the United States, the suicide rate is only half that of road deaths. Japan's suicide rate is 17.4 per 100,000 population, while its traffic accident death rate is 10.2. In the United States, it is 11.8 for suicides and 22.9 for traffic fatalities.

— Among Western nations, the

United States has the highest death rate for what WHO calls "homicide and injury purposely inflicted by other persons." The 10.5 violent deaths per 100,000 reported by U.S. officials in 1980 contrasted with rates of .07 in Britain and Wales.

In El Salvador, where guerrillas have been fighting a five-year battle with government troops, the rate was 37.6.

— More people die from "accidental falls" than in traffic accidents in France. In 1981, 12,059 people were killed in falls and 11,033 died in traffic accidents.

— Heart ailments and other diseases of the circulatory system range from 248.7 in Japan to 643.4 in Austria.

— The cancer death rate ranges from 143.3 in Japan to 27.42 in Denmark. Despite a general trend towards greater longevity, the publication suggests that life expectancy for both men and women receded in two countries, Canada and Luxembourg, during the last two years listed.

GENEVA — Selected mortality rates according to the 1984 WHO statistical year book (country, year, specific death rate per 100,000 population):

	Circulatory	Cancer	Traffic	Suicide	Homicide	Liver
Brazil (80)	158.8	50.2	16.7	3.3	11.7	8.1
East Ger. (78)	795.8	224.2	16.5	—	—	14.1
Sweden (82)	611.7	233.2	9.6	19.4	1.2	8.7
Norway (82)	497.2	225.3	10.4	14.0	1.0	4.6
France (81)	374.8	234.7	20.4	19.6	1.0	27.6
Finland (80)	486.2	189.9	11.9	25.7	3.3	6.3
Denmark (82)	511.1	274.2	13.0	29.0	1.0	10.9
New Zeal (81)	389.2	177.0	21.6	10.1	1.3	4.6
Scotl (83)	626.0	275.9	12.4	9.8	1.6	8.4
Eng-Ws (82)	573.0	263.0	10.6	8.6	0.7	4.3
Neth. (82)	368.5	222.3	11.7	10.7	0.8	5.4
Italy (80)	465.3	213.5	19.2	7.3	1.9	34.3
Ire. (80)	499.2	184.9	16.7	6.3	0.7	3.3
Hungary (82)	726.8	263.9	15.3	43.5	2.4	32.2
Greece (82)	398.8	174.2	19.7	3.5	0.9	1.4
W. Ger. (82)	585.0	259.5	17.8	21.3	1.2	25.2
Belgium (79)	486.5	264.9	23.2	21.5	1.6	13.4
Japan (82)	248.7	143.3	10.2	17.4	0.9	14.0
Austria (82)	643.4	253.6	25.0	27.6	1.6	28.7
USA (80)	437.2	183.3	22.9	11.8	10.5	13.5
Paraguay (80)	180.0	54.0	13.7	3.1	9.1	5.7
Chile (82)	168.2	102.4	10.2	5.6	3.1	29.5
El Salv. (81)	51.5	19.3	17.0	9.7	37.6	6.2
Canada (82)	326.5	170.4	16.5	14.3	2.4	11.1
Mauritius (81)	276.0	54.6	3.8	2.0	0.7	9.2

Everton goes back on top

LONDON (R) — Osvaldo Ardiles and Bryan Robson, two of the world's truly great footballers, enjoyed contrasting fortunes in the English first division Saturday.

Ardiles, the little Argentine, made his return at Queen's Park Rangers after an eight-month absence but his incommensurable touches could not save Tottenham from dropping two valuable points in a 2-2 draw which allowed Everton to go back on top.

Everton, who beat Newcastle 4-0 at home, now boast 49 points from 24 games, two points more than Tottenham.

Third-placed Manchester United, another six points in arrears, were beaten 1-0 at home by lowly Coventry after losing the services of Robson, who was taken to hospital with a suspected dislocated shoulder.

The England captain crashed heavily into an advertising hoarding 10 minutes into the second half after chasing a long ball on the icy pitch.

The weather played havoc with the first division programme and only six of the 11 scheduled matches were completed. Liverpool's clash at Sunderland was abandoned at halftime for safety reasons.

Ardiles, out of action since last May due to a series of leg injuries, came on as substitute for Nigerian

winger John Chidozie in the 33rd minute and, although he showed glimpses of his past form, it will obviously be some time before he is back to his best.

Tottenham made the finest possible start when Garth Crooks shot them ahead after just four minutes but Rangers' striker Gary Bannister put the home side in front with an 18th and 53rd minute double.

But with Ardiles and Glenn Hoddle providing a succession of openings, Mark Falco salvaged a point for Tottenham midway through the second half.

Everton, whose sheer consistency may just take them to their first championship victory since 1970, crushed Newcastle with goals from Kevin Sheedy (2), Graeme Sharp and Derek Mountfield.

Without Robson, Manchester United simply fell apart at Old Trafford and Coventry snatched an unexpected win when former

Tottenham striker Terry Gibson scored the only goal of the game in the 70th minute.

Newly-promoted Sheffield Wednesday continue to enjoy life in the top flight and they moved into fourth place below United on goal difference with a 2-0 home win over West Bromwich, strikers Imre Varadi and Lee Chapman scoring a goal apiece.

The Scottish Premier League was also affected by the weather and Aberdeen took advantage of Glasgow Celtic's afternoon off by opening up a wide gap at the top with a crushing 5-0 win at Morton.

Aberdeen have now taken 37 points from 23 games, six points more than Celtic who have two matches in hand.

Third-placed Glasgow Rangers, who are on the 28-point mark, failed to close the gap on their rivals when they were beaten 2-1 at home by relegation-haunted Hibernian.

Brian Rice shot the Edinburgh club ahead after eight minutes and although Iain Ferguson equalised shortly before the interval, Hibernian struck the decisive blow four minutes from time when Colin Harris scored the winner.

Olympic star says blood doping is dangerous

NEW YORK (R) — Olympic superstar Carl Lewis said Saturday he thought blood doping was physically harmful and did nothing to boost athletic performance.

"I don't think anything is good

when you're messing with the human body," he told reporters after accepting another award for his performance at the Los Angeles Olympics where he won four gold medals.

"I don't feel it's good for you physically and I don't think it helps. But I can't judge what other people do."

Rolling Stone, a U.S. magazine, has alleged in an article to be published next month that members of the U.S. medal-winning cycling team had received blood transfusions in a hotel room near the Olympic velodrome in an attempt to increase their endurance.

It said blood taken from them was treated to produce a concentration of red blood cells and then re-injected before events "to raise (the athletes') endurance and win a medal."

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West German midfielder Bernd Schuster

Big four get down to real business in Masters tennis

NEW YORK (R) — The outsiders have finally been eliminated, though not without difficulty, and the big four get down to the really serious business in the semifinals of the Grand Prix Masters Tennis Championships.

The two matches are as the seedings predicted, with American top seed and defending champion John McEnroe meeting Sweden's Mats Wilander, who was seeded fourth, and second-seeded Jimmy Connors playing Ivan Lendl of Czechoslovakia, the third seed.

As in the first two quarter-finals matches, the underdogs in Friday's two contests did not succumb meekly. Eliot Teltscher put fellow-American Connors under great pressure with his attacking game before Connors gained control to win 6-2, 6-4. Joakim Nystrom of Sweden made Lendl work extremely hard before the Czechoslovak moved through 6-4, 7-6.

Having lost to Connors 12 straight times, Teltscher was determined to "do something different" when they met in Madison Square Garden Friday.

True to his word, the 25-

year-old Californian did, attacking the net more often than usual and playing more aggressively from the baseline as he took a 4-2 lead in the second set.

But his strategy ultimately failed, mainly because the 32-year-old Connors is able to adapt to any type of game while never changing his own slashing style of play.

"I tried coming in a little more," said Teltscher. "But he hit the ball hard and deep, as he always does. Every time we play, he does something a little better."

The match was a lacklustre affair, although Connors drew occasional roars from the gallery with his usual assortment of spectacular volleys and groundstroke winners.

Though Connors had slight problems, he never came under the pressure experienced by McEnroe and Wilander on Thursday. McEnroe trailed by a set and 3-0 before beating Anders Jarryd 2-6, 6-4, 6-2 while Wilander had to save three match points before subduing American Johan Kriek 6-4, 3-6, 7-6.

Lendl found another member of

Schuster finally fulfils promise

By Gudrun Greunke
Reuter

BARCELONA, Spain — Bernd Schuster, the West German midfielder who first demonstrated his glittering talents at the 1980 European Championships, is fulfilling his soccer promise after years of controversy and injury.

The vision and skills of the blond 25-year-old are one of the chief reasons for Barcelona's renaissance under English manager Terry Venables this season which could result in the Catalans winning their first league title in 11 years.

"If he maintains the consistency

he has shown this year I think he is the best midfielder player in the world," Venables told Reuters. "I am very impressed with him as a player."

Dubbed the "Kaiser of Barcelona" for his effortless domination of midfield, Schuster has also scored six goals in 18 games — and in the process become the darling of the Catalan sports press.

But it was not always so. Schuster arrived in Spain in October 1980 with a reputation for being hard to handle after a row with the manager of his former club Cologne.

Schuster started his career with Augsburg but joined Cologne in 1977 despite claims by Borussia Moenchengladbach that he had agreed to play for them.

He blossomed under Cologne manager Hennes Weisweiler, becoming a member of the national squad while still a teenager, and the thrilling part he played in the West German European Championship victory in Italy led many to compare his skills with those of the young Franz Beckenbauer.

But Schuster soon proved he did not possess the ice-cool temperament of "Kaiser Franz". Cologne began the next season badly and Schuster indulged in a public slanging match with the club's new manager Karl-Heinz Heddergott which led to his relegation to the reserves.

After lengthy but unsuccessful talks with New York Cosmos, who were managed by Weisweiler, Cologne sold Schuster to Barcelona for over \$2 million.

But controversy continued to mark his career. In the spring of 1981 a simmering feud with national team manager Jupp Derwall

flared into open warfare.

Derwall had dropped Schuster when it seemed the young player was heading for Cosmos and what Derwall termed the "operetta football" of the U.S., and in May 1981 he axed Schuster again for not attending a post-match party.

Schuster had missed the party to visit his wife in Cologne and many believed that Gaby, a forceful ex-model considerably older than her husband, was behind the clash with Derwall.

Relations deteriorated further when Derwall said Schuster would not find a place in the 1982 World Cup squad — and the midfielder said he was not willing to play anyway while the outspoken Paul Breitner was "ruling the roost".

Ironically, Schuster would probably have been unable to play in Spain because in December 1981 he tore knee ligaments during a match in Bilbao and was out of soccer for many months.

He made his peace with Derwall in 1982 but another injury, a fracture in his right foot, in May 1984 meant he was also unable to play in last year's European Championships.

West Germany's poor showing in France led to the manager's resignation but Schuster's relations with Derwall's successor, Beckenbauer, appear no better.

Beckenbauer says Schuster will be considered only if he is available for every match. As yet the midfielder has declined to make such a commitment.

But Venables, his fourth Barcelona coach in four years, seems to have found the right formula to get the most out of his young player.

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Goodyear 6	Grindlays 4
Intercon 12	Erickson 0
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Volvo 6	Goodyear 1
Grindlays 6	
Mids	American Express 2
Arab Wings 16	Lego 0
International Traders 13	Chase Manhattan 3
Mariott 4	American Express 3
Cairo-Amman 4	Arab Wings 2
International Traders 8	Lego 4
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Japanese business is divided over economic ties with China

TOKYO (R) — Peking's leanings towards a more capitalist economy raise the prospect of a marriage between Japan's financial and technological power and China's millions to create a formidable economic force in Asia.

Japanese businessmen are divided about the idea, however. "It is a possibility in the distant future, but it will probably not happen in this century," senior Japanese trade ministry official Mr. Hideki Takahashi told Reuters.

Under the leadership of Mr. Deng Xiaoping, China has invited foreign investors to start joint ventures using their expertise and Chinese workers to modernise China's economy.

Economists here say Sino-Japanese joint ventures and technology transfers are growing rapidly in activities as diverse as making tape measures to running a computer school.

But many Japanese businessmen are still wary about involving their companies in China's modernisation programme and, as a result, Peking is unsatisfied with Japan's contribution.

Mr. Haruo Okada, a Japanese parliamentarian who met Mr. Deng recently, said in a magazine article that the Chinese leader felt the commitment from large Japanese companies was minute.

Trade between Japan and China has been relatively balanced in the past, with Japan buy-

ing fuels from China and the Chinese buying steel and machinery from the Japanese.

But now the trade balance is tilting in Japan's favour due to rising exports of its consumer goods, particularly cars, and China has begun to demand transfers of technology.

The Nomura Research Institute says the number of Japanese joint ventures in China more than doubled last year from the 12 in existence at the end of 1983 and that the "Chinese fever" of Japanese companies is not likely to subside in the near future.

The size of China's population alone is enticing.

"Given the billion people in China and a car ownership of just one per 1,000 against one for every 10 in Japan, there's enormous potential demand," Mr. Hiroo Matsuda, an executive with the Nissan Motor Company, told Reuters in an interview.

Banks too caught "Chinese fever" when the Bank of China came to Tokyo in November to float its first large yen bond, for some \$80 million. Bankers eagerly await a return.

Mr. Katsuya Takahashi, general manager of Nomura Securities International finance department, says a "special relationship" is growing between Japan and China in the financial area.

"Chinese borrowers will keep coming here," he told Reuters. But still there are sceptics

about. Some Japanese firms argue that assessing the China market simply in terms of population is unrealistic. They wonder whether China's millions have enough money to buy Japan's goods and want to see more market research before moving into China.

Mr. Takahashi, senior official in the trade ministry's North Asia division, told Reuters there was still a feeling that China's legal framework was inadequate as well as concern about companies having to take on workers at high wages.

And could China's open-door policy come to an end? Fresh in the minds of Japanese businessmen is the blow suffered by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries in the late 1970s when China cancelled contracts to build a sophisticated steel mill complex at Baoshan near Shanghai.

"A great many Japanese corporations are apprehensive about China's future policies. They fear they face the prospect of being kicked out when their usefulness is over," Mr. Takahashi said.

And companies asked to transfer their technology do not see how the Chinese can absorb it quickly, he added.

"China lacks even basic technical knowledge and its engineers need more training. It is impossible for them to cope with today's leading technologies," he concluded.

Britain faces pound worth less than dollar

LONDON (R) — With sterling sliding rapidly on the foreign exchanges, the British are for the first time facing the prospect that the pound may soon be worth less than the dollar.

The pound, which 35 years ago could buy \$4, touched a record low last week of less than \$1.13 and many market dealers believe that the traumatic day when the two currencies are at parity may not be far off.

Bookmakers have started quoting odds on when it will happen and dealers on the exchanges are supposed to be planning "parity parties" to mark the occasion.

The experts say the pound's chances of escaping such humiliation rest largely with oil prices. As the only major oil-exporting industrialised country, Britain depends heavily upon its North Sea oil revenue, which reached £12 billion (now \$13.6 billion) in 1984, to balance its budget. A col-

lapse in the oil market would send sterling spinning down.

But if world oil prices do not slump, the pound could well recover some of the ground it has lost and the arrival of parity might be postponed, they say.

The story of how a mighty currency came so low parallels the decline of British power and the rise of the United States.

Before World War I, when the British empire girdled the globe, sterling reigned supreme in world trade. Its value was linked to gold and in 1914 it traded on the exchanges at a steady \$5.

After two world wars and a depression it had slipped to \$4 and Britain had decisively surrendered its economic and military world

dominance to the United States.

In 1949, with the post-war economy struggling and British goods unable to compete abroad, the reforming Labour Party government of Clement Attlee slashed the pound's exchange value by 30 per cent to \$2.80, the most drastic tumble in the currency's history.

Drastic as it was, that devaluation launched sterling on a long period of stability, surviving unchanged for 18 years within the Bretton Woods international financial system, despite the continuing relative decline of the national economy.

When the next sterling devaluation came, amid another trade crisis in 1967, it rocked the world financial order, ended the era of stable foreign exchanges and ultimately freed the pound to sink ever lower against the dollar.

The 1967 devaluation cut the

pound to \$2.40 and helped set off a wave of currency crises elsewhere.

In 1972, as the turmoil continued, Britain abandoned a fixed exchange rate and four years later the pound slumped below \$2 for the first time, hitting a low of \$1.56.

North Sea oil, arriving as it did at a time of world oil shortages, gave the pound its only significant post-war boost, lifting it to \$2.45 in late 1980.

But shortage turned to glut and the dollar, backed by a strong U.S. economy and high interest rates, started a new and relentless rise. The pound plummeted \$1.60 two years ago, \$1.40 one year ago, \$1.30 six months ago and \$1.13 this month.

Will it go lower and reach parity?

"It seems unthinkable, but it is no more impossible than a rate of \$1.20 was a few months ago — nothing is sacrosanct in the market," said Mr. David Sawyer, an analyst at Barclays Bank.

'It's just arithmetic'

Mr. David Kern, chief economist at National Westminster Bank, thinks the psychological breakthrough has already been made, simply because people are ready to talk about parity. "It's just arithmetic," he said.

Mr. Kern thought the pound would recover before it hit parity.

a view shared by several other economists interviewed by Reuters.

Most agreed, however, that the success or failure of oil producing countries, and particularly the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), in showing up oil prices this year will probably be critical in the long term.

There is certainly no indication that Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher will step in to bolster the currency. She has a firm policy of not intervening on the markets.

In economic terms, a weaker pound has advantages, making British goods cheaper on foreign markets and boosting the value of government oil taxes, which are levied in dollars.

But it has the notable drawback of pushing up inflation by increasing the cost of imported goods, and in the eyes of voters it is usually seen as a poor reflection on the government.

The foreign exchanges are a measure of international confidence in Britain, and a historic slip below \$1 would inevitably be an embarrassing moment for Mrs. Thatcher.

It would give headline writers and the Labour opposition a field day. As one economist remarked: "Most people in Britain pay no attention to the price of the pound, but the day it falls below \$1 absolutely everyone will know."

American shoppers are flocking to London with strong dollars

LONDON (R) — Thousands of Americans are going a little further to do their shopping this winter — across the Atlantic to Britain, where they are packing the capital's leading department stores in search of bargains.

Travellers' dollars buy twice the number of pounds they did in 1980, making Cashmere sweaters, China tea services and linen bedding much cheaper in Britain than in the United States.

Traditional winter sales have enhanced the attraction of shopping in London.

When Harrods — the exclusive department store where British royalty shop — threw open its doors earlier this month at the start of a three-week sale, more than 30,000 people charged in during the first hour.

In the first two days, cash registers rang up £8.7 million (\$10 million), 21 per cent more than last year.

"The American presence is very noticeable in the store and this has been spurred by an advertisement Harrods placed in the New York Times, allied to the strong dollar," said managing director Mr. Frank Hewitt.

The full-page advertisement, urging trans-Atlantic shopping trips, was Harrods' first in the U.S. since 1928.

Spending by Americans in Harrods has risen steadily with the slide of the pound. Americans accounted for 25 per cent of Harrods' 1984 turnover and 60 per cent of sales to foreigners.

Fortnum and Mason, London's fashionable food emporium which shuns the word "sale" in favour of "reductions", has equally few qualms about the parlous state of the once-proud pound.

"The after-Christmas trough will be more buoyant than last year thanks to the Americans," said managing director Mr. G.V. Hamilton.

Even DeBrett, the chronicler of Britain's blue-blooded nobility, is cashing in. A new stall at Harrods offers ancestral searches and sale-priced genealogy guides to

the "Texan gentry".

The London Tourist Board estimates that 85,000 Americans will visit Britain this month, over 20 per cent more than in January last year. "When the exchange rate is favourable, we do exceptionally well," a board spokeswoman said.

The dollar's increased buying power and the lure of London's sales have meant good business for airlines.

Eager to woo trans-Atlantic shoppers from New York, Pan American offered a return trip to London at just \$189.

"We want to get across the message that with the dollar so much more valuable, Britain and its shops are great value," a spokesman for the airline said.

For those not wanting to waste valuable bargain-hunting time looking for hotels, the American Express travel group has a full weekend package trip.

Harrods' spokeswoman Ms. Nicki Cartwright said many Americans had taken holidays to coincide with the sale or flown in especially.

One couple laid out more than \$5,000 to spend a single day at the sale, flying to and from London on

British Airways' supersonic jet Concorde, she said.

"I've served people here who are so tired from jet-lag they can hardly stand up," Harrods' crockery salesman Mr. Martin McHugh said.

The exchange rate means that the cost of air fares can be quickly recouped by a few shrewd purchases in the sales. A Burberry coat that sells for over \$350 in New York costs under \$200 in a London sale.

Other bargains include a golden sable coat, on sale at half its original price for only £30,000 (\$34,000).

On sale days the usually genteel surroundings of Harrods' fur department resemble a boisterous jubilee sale, with the accents of New York and Dallas unmistakable in the din.

"It reached a point where we couldn't cope," said the head of the department Mr. Alex Fischel. "There were people everywhere trying on furs and serving themselves."

But so long as the dollars continue to flow, few at the store are likely to complain about the noise.

Finance ministers call special session ahead of IMF talks

BONN (R) — The finance ministers of the so-called Group of Five leading industrialised nations will hold an extraordinary meeting in Washington in mid-January, a West German finance ministry spokesman said Friday.

Government sources said the meeting between the United States, Japan, West Germany, Britain and France is to prepare for the scheduled April meetings of the interim committee and the development fund of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

But the news raised speculation that moves could be afoot to tackle the dollar's persistent strength on world currency markets, foreign exchange dealers in Frankfurt said.

Government sources said the heads of the five countries' central banks will also take part in the special session, though a Bundesbank spokesman declined to comment.

At their annual meeting last September, the IMF and the World Bank agreed to demand from developing countries for a dialogue with industrial nations on common financial problems.

The dialogue was to take place within the framework of this spring's meetings of the interim committee, a group of 22 ministers from leading IMF member states that deals with proposals for reforming the IMF.

Reagan gives blessing for moves by Congress to reduce spending

WASHINGTON (R) — President Reagan, eager to halve his huge budget deficit, seems increasingly inclined to let Congress take the lead in making the hard choices on government spending cuts.

In his first year in Washington in 1981, Mr. Reagan seized the initiative and won congressional approval for historic cuts on federal spending and the largest tax cut in U.S. history.

But lower taxes have contributed to record deficits that, in the absence of policy changes, are projected to exceed \$200 billion for many years.

Administration officials say cutting the deficit is their top priority, but Mr. Reagan has been unable to come up with a plan that will meet his goal of a \$100 billion deficit in 1988.

He has now signalled he will seriously consider budget plans being prepared in Congress.

"I do not mind if they (Congress) want to do what they're doing and have some plans of their own or suggest some. Maybe they've got some ideas we haven't thought of yet," he told a press conference earlier last week.

While Mr. Reagan remains adamantly opposed to treating the deficits with higher taxes, he hinted at the news conference that he might amend his budget and accept cuts in defence spending and social security if that's what Congress wants.

Mr. Reagan said he would consider a controversial freeze in social security retirement benefits if Congress wanted it.

Perhaps more significantly, Mr. Reagan appeared to leave himself room for an eventual compromise on military spending. He defended his rejection of massive arms spending cuts already sought by his economic advisers, but did not say flatly that further cuts were unacceptable.

Mr. Reagan said arms spending was governed by national security needs, not by economic considerations. He was reluctant to clamp down on future Pentagon spending because defence needs were dictated by outside forces and were therefore unpredictable.

Privately, senior administration officials point out that Mr. Reagan has consistently taken a hard line in public and then bowed to congressional insistence that arms spending increase at a slower pace than projected in his formal budget requests.

Mr. Donald Regan, White House chief of staff, strongly denied in an interview with news agencies Saturday that the administration had lost the initiative on budget control.

Other officials said a spending freeze plan now being debated by Senators from Mr. Reagan's own Republican Party could set the stage for a compromise that would cut the deficit and enable the president to get much of his own budget approved.

Mr. Reagan's spending blueprint falls short of his own deficit goals, one aide said, and the Senate effort "is the only way we can get out of our bind on social security and defence."

Iowa Republican Senator Charles Grassley also voiced optimism following a meeting with White House aides.

"I think we can reach an accommodation with the White House on defence... the president is being more compromising than in the past," Mr. Grassley told reporters.

Mr. Reagan said last Wednesday he wants to hold government spending in the 1986 financial year to the 1985 level. That would reduce the 1986 deficit to about \$170 billion instead of the \$225 billion currently estimated.

That would require spending cuts of \$55 billion. The budget document Mr. Reagan will send to Congress on Feb. 4 will only identify cuts worth about \$42 billion.

Current White House budget plans leave Mr. Reagan more than \$40 billion short of his target 1988 deficit of \$100 billion.

Republican senators are weighing a spending freeze plan that would save about \$6 billion in 1986 by postponing a cost-of-living increase in social security retirement benefits.

Their plan would also trim arms spending by about \$20 billion in 1986 and \$107 billion over the next three years.

The legislators say their plan would be fairer and easier to enact than Mr. Reagan's package.

THE BETTER HALF. By Harris

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

YEEND
PREYK
SLIMIE
INTOAR

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: JUST "O O O O" & "O O O O" (Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumble: FORUM GAUZE EXTANT DULCET
Answer: The reason so many of us are disappointed with our lot these days is that it's no longer this — A LOT

Peanuts



Mutt 'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



YOUR DAILY Horoscope

from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, JAN. 13, 1985

GENERAL TENDENCIES: After getting a needed rest you would be wise to consider your associations with other persons and what you can do to enhance the accord that exists between you and them.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Get something at which you are skillful done early, and then make certain you solve those problems with outsiders.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Plan some time to build up your energies through exercise. If you want recreation, make sure it is not too costly.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Some thoughtful act to prove your devotion to your mate is wise in the morning. Conditions may be tense later.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Early enjoy your abode since later situations may arise that will require strength, care and caution.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Meditating early can be most helpful to you and later you can gain benefits from this. Important that you exercise care while on the road.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Any financial discussion should be handled during the daytime since later practical affairs could bring tensions.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You have the right answers to problems in the morning, but later our vision is somewhat blurred and you could make mistakes.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) You have a plan in mind that will not bring you much success, so forget about it and latch on to something better tomorrow.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Although you want to go out socially, it is best to handle some personal affair that is important.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Avoid higher-ups since they are not in a very favorable mood. A day to be wise and careful and safe.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Not a good day to take any trips of any kind, even mentally, since you could have bad results. Don't let anyone impose on you.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) A good day to study in to written material and rid yourself of stumbling blocks in the path of your progress.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY ... he or she will be a born trouble shooter and will be diplomatic in both personal and business dealings and thereby avoid having others use force on him or her. Therefore, send to schools where this kind of mentality can be nurtured. Teach self defense.

THE Daily Crossword

By Roma Schmidt

ACROSS

1. Bulk
5. Game marble
8. Snakes
12. Fish sauce
13. Indian water vessel
15. Sad
16. Marine polyp
18. Use an sugar
19. Legatos
20. Cavalryman
22. Observes
23. Gym equipment
24. "My Sons"
26. Gloom
30. That girl
33. Fabled marine monster
35. Charges
38. Had
37. Wedding words
38. Russ. mountain
39. Pirate captain
40. Like the weather
42. Beat of murder
43. Canyons
44. Charged particle
45. Caesar
46. Water bodies
48. Cut short
52. Postures
55. Alop
56. Marine weed
58. Sports attendance
59. Come to a point
60. Ireland
61. Shredded cabbage
62. Church seat
63. Drowning horse

DOWN

1. Brewing mixture
2. Away from the wind
3. Atlantic resort spots
4. Frighten
5. Jones and Seaver
6. From — Z
7. Desire
8. Head churchman
9. Spill over
10. Undisciplined
11. Velleitator
13. Antilles
14. Loner
17. Required
21. Bladed pole
24. Buddhist king of old
25. Hardtack
31. Greeting
32. Ruhr city
34. Sub-Lit.
35. Monastery man
38. Dialogue
40. Cruel person
41. Pearl haven
43. By way of
45. Scatter
47. Feeds the
48. Swampy
49. Egg-shaped
50. Gr. letter
51. Bound
52. Light ten
54. Gam
57. Mince

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

ACROSS: 1. BULK, 5. GAMMAB, 8. SERPENTS, 12. FISH SAUCE, 13. INDIAN WATER VESSEL, 15. SAD, 16. MARINE POLYP, 18. USE AN SUGAR, 19. LEGATOS, 20. CAVALRYMAN, 22. OBSERVES, 23. GYM EQUIPMENT, 24. "MY SONS", 26. GLOOM, 30. THAT GIRL, 33. FABLED MARINE MONSTER, 35. CHARGES, 38. HAD, 37. WEDDING WORDS, 38. RUSS. MOUNTAIN, 39. PIRATE CAPTAIN, 40. LIKE THE WEATHER, 42. BEAT OF MURDER, 43. CANYONS, 44. CHARGED PARTICLE, 45. CAESAR, 46. WATER BODIES, 48. CUT SHORT, 52. POSTURES, 55. ALOP, 56. MARINE WEED, 58. SPORTS ATTENDANCE, 59. COME TO A POINT, 60. IRELAND, 61. SHREDDED CABBAGE, 62. CHURCH SEAT, 63. DROWNING HORSE.

DOWN: 1. BREWING MIXTURE, 2. AWAY FROM THE WIND, 3. ATLANTIC RESORT SPOTS, 4. FRIGHTEN, 5. JONES AND SEAVER, 6. FROM — Z, 7. DESIRE, 8. HEAD CHURCHMAN, 9. SPILL OVER, 10. UNDISCIPLINED, 11. VELLEITATOR, 13. ANTILLES, 14. LONER, 17. REQUIRED, 21. BLADED POLE, 24. BUDDHIST KING OF OLD, 25. HARDTACK, 31. GREETING, 32. RUHR CITY, 34. SUB-LIT., 35. MONASTERY MAN, 38. DIALOGUE, 40. CRUEL PERSON, 41. PEARL HAVEN, 43. BY WAY OF, 45. SCATTER, 47. FEEDS THE, 48. SWAMPY, 49. EGG-SHAPED, 50. GR. LETTER, 51. BOUND, 52. LIGHT TEN, 54. GAM, 57. MINCE.

France declares emergency amid riots in New Caledonia

NOUMEA (R) — France Saturday declared a state of emergency in its Pacific possession of New Caledonia amid riots by white settlers and the killing of a leading black militant, which appeared to doom independence plans for the territory.

Police moved in with tear gas and stun grenades to clear several thousand settlers from the streets of Noumea, the capital, when the emergency order came into effect. French special envoy Edgard Pisani issued the order, which included a dusk to dawn curfew on private transport and a ban on arms possession, after the killing of Eloi Machoro, who had led a campaign by militant Melanesian Kanaks for independence.

Police said they shot Machoro and an aide in a gunfight Saturday about 80 kilometres from the capital, Noumea, after surrounding a house in which he was hiding with supporters.

Machoro was "minister for internal security" in a provisional government set up on Dec. 1 by the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS).

The FLNKS issued a statement urging supporters not to take action until after Machoro's funeral but said his death cancelled all

current peace talks.

They did not give a date for the funeral of Machoro, 38, a former schoolteacher who led the Kanak revolt by sinking an axe into a ballot box in territorial elections on Nov. 18.

Militants among Kanaks, who make up only 43 per cent of the 145,000 population after immigration from France and other Pacific states, boycotted the poll. But the FLNKS said in its statement Saturday that the killing of Machoro returns independence negotiations to the starting point.

The talks began in early December after militant Kanaks lifted the roadblocks which had paralysed most of the island. The death Saturday brought the death toll in violence to 19.

Mr. Pisani on Monday proposed an independence referendum in July in which a "Yes" vote would end 131 years of French rule next January. France would retain spe-

cial links such as in defence and internal security.

"The action Saturday cancels the proposals of Pisani," said the FLNKS.

Settlers took to the streets of Noumea Friday night, burning homes and offices of Kanak supporters, after the 17-year-old son of a white farmer was killed.

Yves Tual was shot dead by gunfire from a forest some 80 kilometres west of Noumea. Police have taken in a group of local FLNKS supporters for questioning.

The rioting by several thousand settlers continued into Saturday and when the emergency order came into operation a squadron of crack riot police began taking tougher action. They charged crowds, making mass arrests among the settlers, who were chanting "Pisani assassin" and objecting to his independence plan.

Stones and other missiles were being thrown by the protesters, split into groups and surging round streets heading to the French High Commission.

At least 24 people have been injured in the riots, officials said. There was no figure on the numbers arrested but many were

held in the high commission's tennis court pending questioning in police stations.

The demonstrators later dispersed, leaving the city centre looking as though it had been hit by a cyclone, residents said.

Debris, including empty tear gas canisters, rocks and masses of litter and bottles, were strewn around the main square.

There were also several burned-out cars, two-fire scarred buildings and a gutted office, all set on fire during the night of the protests.

Meanwhile police Saturday charged two FLNKS supporters with the murder of Jean-Marie Sangame, a resident of the east coast town of Hienghene who was found shot dead in his home on December 12, police said.

Tual was a nephew of the mayor of Thio, Roger Galliot, the only elected representative in the territory of France's extreme right-wing National Front Party. Fifteen Kanaks from a nearby tribe were detained for questioning after the killing.

"I'm giving the authorities an ultimatum," Mr. Galliot told reporters. "If they do nothing, we'll deal with the killers ourselves."



French helmet riot policemen block a street Friday in Noumea with tear-gas and concussion grenade, rioting to about 2,000 demonstrators violently

protesting the killing of a teenage European (AP wirephoto)

Thais lay barbed wire on frontier

ARANYAPRATHET, Thailand (AP) — Thai troops laid down kilometres of barbed wire along the Thai-Kampuchean border and a key frontier commander said Saturday he was concerned that Vietnamese troops would next strike a concentration of Kampuchean civilians and defeated guerrillas.

Maj. Gen. Salya Sriphen told reporters that Thai soldiers Saturday completed laying down six to seven kilometres of barbed wire to demarcate the frontier at Ampil Camp, a Kampuchean resistance base overrun and now held by the Vietnamese. Following the seizure of Ampil on Jan. 7, Vietnamese and Thai officers met and agreed to a clear demarcation to avoid hostilities between the two sides. Orange flags and boundary markers were planted, and Gen. Salya, who commands Thailand's eastern task force, said the wire would further ensure that the Vietnamese would not stray into Thai territory.

The three lines of wire, Gen. Salya said, run north-south about 500 metres east of an anti-tank ditch where Thai troops are dug in. Initially the Vietnamese moved close to the ditch but then withdrew after the talks.

Gen. Salya said the Vietnamese might continue their most potent offensive of the six-year-war by attacking San Ro Changan, a camp of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF). The camp is located about seven kilometres north of Ampil, which had served as headquarters for this anti-Communist resistance group since 1979.

The defenders of Ampil, estimated at about 5,000 men, retreated to the San Ro Changan area when the Vietnamese swept into their stronghold. Dong Ruk has a civilian population of 17,500 Kampuchean and 4,300 Vietnamese who fled their homeland across Kampuchea. The civilians from San Ro Changan were evacuated into Thai territory last week.

The Thai military near this key border town also presented five of six Vietnamese soldiers they said had crossed the frontier and surrendered to the Thais since Jan. 8. Two of the five were identified as officers and all said they were tired of the war in Kampuchea and wished to be resettled in third countries.

Lt. Pham Van Phuoc, 21, said he had been assigned to draft 30 Kampuchean civilians to construct a 16-kilometre-long earthen defence wall near the Thai frontier. The wall ran parallel to the frontier about 12 kilometres inside Kampuchean territory, he said. Fighting the Vietnamese, who

invaded Kampuchea in late 1978, are the KPNLF, the communist Khmer Rouge and a third group loyal to one time Kampuchean head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk.

Several among a group of refugees from the Kampuchean interior said Saturday that they fled because Hanot's troops were drafting them to perform a variety of tasks, including the clearing of mined fields.

The group, which included one man who claimed to have trekked for 15 days from Phnom Penh to the frontier, was spotted by reporters not long after they crossed the border near the embattled KPNLF camp of Rithisen.

The camp was attacked by the Vietnamese on Christmas Day but the KPNLF guerrillas have managed to hold a section of it and the fighting there continues.

Lia Ne, Rithisen's military commander, said four of his soldiers were killed in combat Friday night.

The KPNLF has borne the brunt of the current Vietnamese offensive, with all of its major camps attacked or overrun. But KPNLF President Son Sann claimed Friday that his guerrilla force of 15,000 was intact and had suffered minimal casualties while inflicting large losses on the Vietnamese.

Kennedy visits South West Africa

WINDHOEK, South West Africa (AP) — Sen. Edward Kennedy arrived in the disputed territory of South-West Africa to meet church and nationalist leaders Saturday, after declaring that the American people were losing patience with South Africa's racial practices.

Kennedy's plane flew from Cape Town, at the southern tip of Africa, and landed at Windhoek about noon (1000GMT).

In Cape Town, he said Americans will not long support constructive engagement, the U.S. policy of political and economic contacts with South Africa seen by the Reagan administration as the best way to promote gradual and

peaceful change. "One reason for my trip here is to signal that the vast majority of my fellow citizens oppose apartheid and we will not accept endless delay and empty excuses for it," Sen. Kennedy, a Democrat, told a rally Friday night in the coloured, or mixed-race township of Athlone, near Cape Town.

South Africans who took comfort from official U.S. policy statements concerning the white-minority government's practices have "surprising and painful days ahead of them," Sen. Kennedy said. "For my nation will not long continue a policy of so-called constructive engagement with a social order so entirely destructive of human rights."

Sen. Kennedy flew to Windhoek, capital of South-West Africa or Namibia, for one and one-half hours of meetings with local leaders. He was expected to fly to Johannesburg, where he began his South African tour eight days ago.

On Sunday, the Senator speaks at a Roman Catholic Church in Soweto, Johannesburg's black satellite city. He travels to Lusaka Sunday to meet Zambian leaders including President Kenneth Kaunda, a peacemaker in Southern African affairs, and then flies to London en route home.

Swedish town recovers from gas leak

STOCKHOLM (R) — The Swedish town of Karlskoga was recovering from a leak of 30 tonnes of poisonous gas Saturday as officials worried that present safety precautions may not be enough to prevent such a thing happening again.

A huge cloud of gas, leaked from a gunpowder plant owned by the Bofors Armaments Group, evaporated into the atmosphere Saturday leaving only a few light injuries among the town's 35,000 inhabitants.

But as an official inquiry began into the accident, government experts expressed growing concern about Sweden's vulnerability to such incidents despite a battery of safety regulations.

"It has sounded an alarm bell for the future. There are certainly grave risks which we have to some extent overlooked," Valfrid Paulsson, head of Sweden's Environmental Protection Board, told Swedish Television.

In Karlskoga itself, 240 kilometres west of Stockholm, life was returning to normal Saturday after inhabitants were trapped in their homes for almost a day by the corrosive gas.

Buses were running again, shops reopened and police removed their gas masks as the last remaining road blocks around the town's industrial area were dismantled and all 300 people evacuated Friday night returned home.

Swedish Television said the eight shift had gone back to work at the Nobelkemi Chemical and Gunpowder Plant from where the gas, used in the nitration process of explosives, leaked out and enveloped the snow-covered town.

Mr. Paulsson said the real problem facing Sweden was that caused by residential areas creeping ever closer to chemical plants.

The accident caused dismay in Karlskoga where safety regulations are particularly tight because of its century-old domination by a high-risk armaments industry.

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COLUMN

Protesters lob eggs at Thatcher

LEICESTER, England (R) — Demonstrators bombarded Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher with eggs but plain clothes police and security guards shielded her from the attack. The missiles were thrown during a noisy protest by about 500 people outside a centre for disabled workers in Leicester, central England, which Mrs. Thatcher was visiting. Police, who called in reinforcements to control the crowd, made five arrests. The demonstrators chanted support for striking miners and opposition to government policies throughout the visit.

'Good Samaritan' turns bad

OVERLAND PARK, Kansas (AP) — An apparent good Samaritan who helped start a woman's car and talked about how dangerous it was to be out at night then pulled a gun and took her purse, police said. Karen Corson, 19, told police she was stranded in southern Overland Park about 1 a.m. Friday after her car broke down, and that the man pulled up behind her in a light blue pickup truck. "He stopped and asked, 'Can I help you?'" said police Capt. Ron Jackson. "He crawled under the car and got it going. He then pulled an unknown-type handgun out of his pocket and stated, 'give me your purse.'" said Sgt. Larry Dixon. The man then fled with the purse, which contained \$5 and other belongings, police said.

Boat girl wins place at Oxford

LONDON (R) — A Vietnamese boat-girl who arrived in England five years ago not knowing a word of English has won a place at Britain's Oxford University, a British newspaper reported Saturday. The Daily Mail said Ly, 18, fled Vietnam in a boat with her parents and younger brother and settled in Hampshire, southern England. Ly will be studying physics at St. Hugh's College, Oxford. "It really is a dream come true. I don't think I would live to get here, never mind that I would be going to one of the world's most famous universities," the paper quoted Ly as saying.

Beauty queen banished from BBC

LONDON (R) — Jill Saxby Friday night became the last Beauty Queen to be shown on the television screens of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The BBC is ending its coverage of beauty contests, with Programme Controller Michael Grade describing them as "an unacceptable anachronism in an age of equality, bordering on the offensive." Friday night's contest was for the Miss Great Britain title, won by Saxby, a 25-year-old brunette from Sheffield, northern England. The annual Miss World contest is screened by a commercial television company.

Two rhinos die fighting for love

GAUHATI, India (R) — An Indian train killed two male rhinos who were locked in combat on a railway line over the favours of a female, a wildlife official said Saturday. P.C. Das, a wildlife conservation officer in the north east state of Assam, told Reuters the two, which has escaped from a forest sanctuary at Digaru 25 kilometres from here, did not notice the train coming. One died a few hours after being hit and the other on Thursday, five days after the incident, he said. The train was not damaged. Forest rangers removed the rhino horns, highly valued in Asia for their alleged sex-booster properties.

Big rock festival opens in Rio

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP) — A gathering billed as one of the biggest rock music festivals ever opened Friday night with tens of thousands of fans, mostly young, converging on a specially built "rock city" on the outskirts of town. Radio JB, a private radio station broadcasting news bulletins from the scene, said the opening-night crowd was approaching 200,000. Organisers predicted 1.5 million people would turn out for the 10-day festival.

Gandhi wants better ties with Pakistan

KARACHI (R) — Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said in an interview published here Saturday that he wanted to improve relations with Pakistan but felt Islamabad did not seriously want to do so.

He told the Karachi daily Dawn in New Delhi that he wanted talks between the rival neighbours, which broke off last July, to res-

ume but felt Pakistan's statements to the same effect rang hollow.

"We sometimes get the feeling Pakistan is not very serious about the whole thing," he said. "Although you talk very much, your actions do not match your words. That sort of thing puts us in a bit of an awkward position."

Mr. Gandhi praised President Mohammad Zia Ul Haq's interest

in improving ties between the two countries, which have fought three wars since splitting at independence in 1947, but said this did not filter down to lower levels.

"If your actions could match President Zia's statements, we would have no difficulty in resuming negotiations at all," he said. "In fact, there would be no problem at all."

India charged seven captured Sri Lankan Navy troops with rioting and extortion, and began interrogating of their commander about an alleged violation of Indian territorial waters that which further strained relations between the two uneasy neighbours, news reports said Saturday.

The United News of India (UNI) said the Sri Lankans, who were the crew of a naval vessel captured Friday in Indian waters, were brought to Madurai City for interrogation.

Quoting police sources, the news agency said the Sri Lankans had been charged with armed rioting, extorting a confession and causing injury to Indian public servants on duty.

The Indian External Affairs Ministry's spokesman, Salman Haider, could not confirm the report, saying only that an inquiry was being made about Friday's incident.

The Sri Lankans allegedly intruded into India's territorial waters, robbed 20 Indian fishing boats of their catch and nets, and beat up 10 Indian fishermen.

India caught the Sri Lankans in Indian waters, Mr. Haider said. His government Friday expressed its "serious view" of the alleged intrusion to Sri Lanka's diplomatic mission here.

Relations between the two countries, separated by the narrow Palk Strait, have been strained by Sri Lankan accusations that India trains and arms Tamil guerrillas seeking an independent nation in northern Sri Lanka. New Delhi has denied the charge.

India increased its naval forces in the Palk Strait this week, after protesting that the Sri Lankan Navy violated its territorial waters on Monday and killed two Indian fishermen.

Sri Lanka rejected both protests.

It said the seven naval troops were performing legitimate duties within Sri Lankan territorial waters, and pulled alongside the Indian boat after receiving a signal from it.

The Sri Lankan High Commission in New Delhi on Saturday requested that the Indian government release the seamen.

HEILBRONN, West Germany (R) — U.S. army experts were Saturday trying to determine why a Pershing-2 missile caught fire as it was being unpacked at a military base in West Germany, killing three American soldiers and injuring 16 others.

An investigating officer had already been appointed and was on the scene, a U.S. army spokesman told Reuters Friday night.

The fire broke out as troops of the 56th Field Artillery Brigade at the U.S. Camp Red Leg near Heilbronn were unpacking the first stage of a Pershing-2 missile newly arrived from the United States.

The spokesman said the Pershing-2 rocket motor, which is packed with solid fuel, ignited as the part was being removed from its shipping container, causing a searing fire.

"There was no explosion and no nuclear weapons were involved," an official army statement said.

The camp, about 40 kilometres north of Stuttgart, was imm-

India interrogates captured Sri Lankans

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38 Koreans die as bus falls into frozen river

SEOUL (R) — At least 38 people were killed after their bus plunged from a bridge and crashed through the ice of a river near the central South Korean town of Yongdong, police said Saturday.

They had said Friday that 23 people died but more bodies were found when the wreckage was lifted from the river Saturday.

The bus fell seven metres after skidding on the snow-covered bridge, then broke through ice 20 centimetres thick.

Police said only one passenger survived. They believe most victims died in a panic stampede towards exits as the bus filled with water.

Husband kills himself after wife crushed in suitcase

LOS ANGELES, R) — An Iranian man who tried to smuggle his wife into the United States by air in a suitcase killed himself after learning that she had been crushed to death by other baggage, officials said.

The woman's body was discovered on Monday on a luggage carousel at Los Angeles International Airport.

According to authorities here and in Sacramento, California, where the man's body was found Thursday with a self-inflicted gunshot wound, the couple had been married only three weeks.

Bill Gold, a spokesman for the Los Angeles Coroner's Office, identified the woman as Katarina Safarizadeh, 20, of Iran. He said she was the victim of "accidental asphyxiation" in the suitcase.

The body of her husband, Mahmoud Ayazi, 31, also an Iranian, was found in a car in Sacramento, where he had been living for some time.

Sacramento Chief Deputy Coroner Bob Bowers said the grief-stricken Ayazi told a friend who officials did not identify — that he tried to smuggle his wife on a flight from Frankfurt, West Germany.

He said he decided on the scheme after U.S. embassy officials in West Germany told him it would be a "long time" before she would be able to enter the country.

Ayazi told the friend he packed the woman in the suitcase, but discovered her dead when he went to retrieve the luggage.

Bowers said he removed all identification from the body, including a wedding ring and other jewellery.

The woman's passport was found in the car along with Ayazi's body.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN

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A MATTER OF CONTROL

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH

♦ QJ

♦ J982

♦ 1043

♦ A J94

WEST EAST

♦ 763 ♦ 86542

♦ A K J952 ♦ Q6

♦ Q6 ♦ 108732

SOUTH

♦ A K 1093

♦ A Q 105

♦ 87

♦ K5

The bidding:

South West North East

1 ♦ 2 ♦ Dble Pass

3 ♥ Pass 4 ♥ Pass

Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠.

Don't lose control at the bridge table — either of your self or of the hand. Cover the East-West cards with your thumbs and decide how you would play four hearts after West cashes the king-ace of diamonds, felling his partner's queo, and continues with the jack, which you ruff as East, allufs a spade.

North's double of two diamonds was "negative" — i.e., for takeout. South's jump to three hearts was not forcing, but it did show a better than minimum opening bid,

and North had an easy raise to game.

Obviously, the hand presents no problem if trump is 3-2, but what if they split 4-1? If you cross to the queen of spades and take a trump finesse, it wins. You go back to the ace of clubs to repeat the finesse, but now East shows out and, as the cards lie, you cannot recover — down one. Try it.

The winning line after ruffing the third diamond is to